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INFANT

BAPTISM

FROM

HEAVEN:

TWO DISCOURSES

DELIVERED

At HAVERHILL West-Parish, *April 28th, 1765*

The Second EDITION.

With an APPENDIX, obviating some Objections offered against the *Truths* asserted; and some other Remarks upon the late remarkable Performance of Mr. HEZEKIAH SMITH.

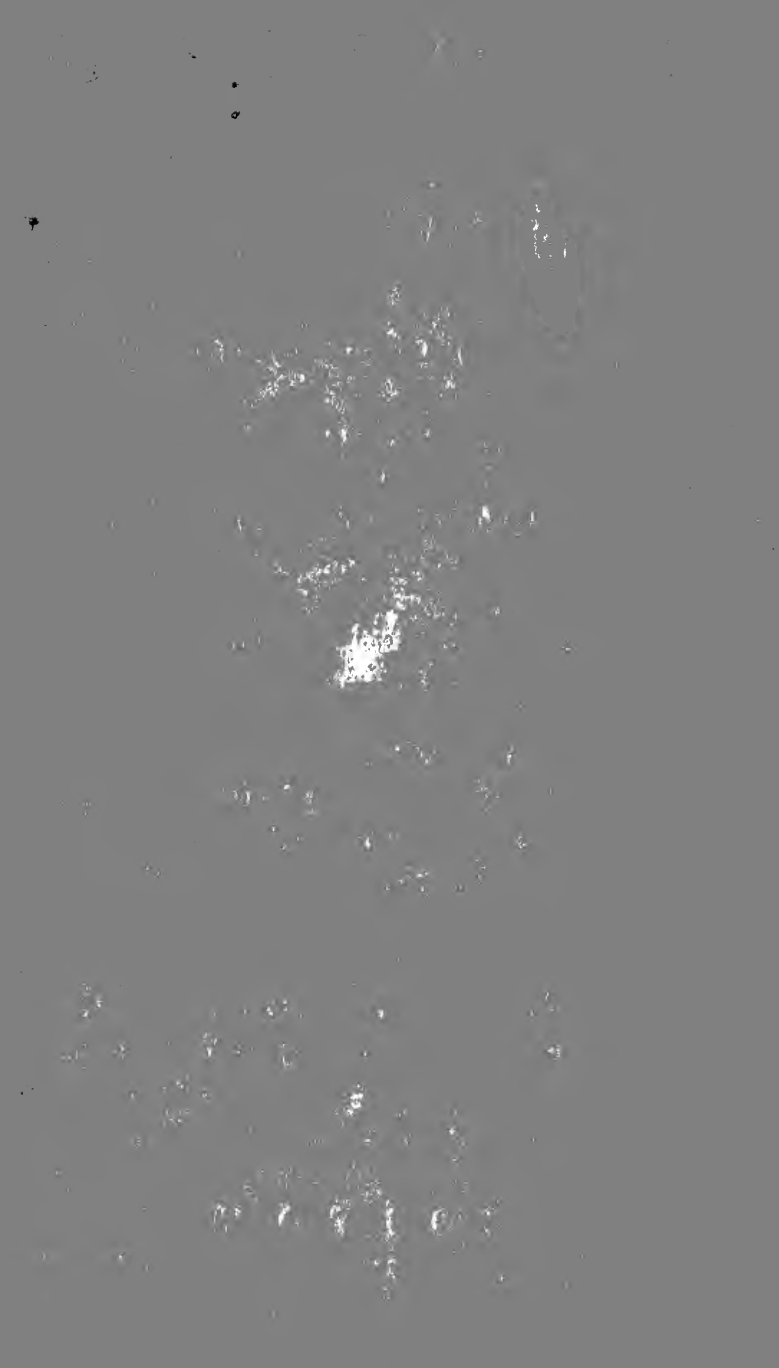
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A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE Preface to the first Edition, and the marginal Notes and References to some worthy Authors, (which I acknowledge were helpful to me in the composition) are omitted in this for the sake of brevity.-----And the many typographical errors in it are now corrected, so far, that I hope, if any still remain, they will not hurt the attentive and judicious Reader.

The general Design, and the evidence given to support the Truths asserted, appear to me in the same light that they have done for more than 30 years past: But upon a close review of the arguments I am more confirmed, and am more sensible of the great importance of the Truths defended.







DISCOURSE I.

ACTS XVI. 33.

— And was baptized, he, and all his; straightway.

THE diffusive goodness of the infinitely glorious God, is eminently displayed, in giving us more noble powers and faculties than the beasts of the earth, and in making us capable of more excellent enjoyments and employments, than merely sensitive creatures. But, when the world of mankind was laid under a deluge of sin and death, by the universal corruption of human nature, and there was none to help, the goodness of God was more eminently displayed in the wonderful work of redemption by his Son Jesus Christ, who was the gift of the Father, and made his soul an offering for sin, that he might see his seed, and the pleasure of the Lord might prosper in his hands.

And as God was pleased to treat with innocent man in a covenant-way, a covenant of works; so he has been pleased to make a new and better covenant, which is in all things well ordered and sure, and to single out some of *Adam's* ruined race and bring

bring them into the bonds of it. Thus particularly, he dealt with *Abraham*, and entailed it unto his seed after him, for an everlasting covenant, which gave them a claim to many great and peculiar privileges. And these privileges the Jews for many ages enjoyed, until, by their unbelief, they forfeited “the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises.” But what qualifies the divine severity, in the rejection of the Jews from being the covenant-people of God, upon their rejecting Jesus Christ as the true Messiah, is, that “through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles;” and so they are become the mystical body of Jesus Christ, or the covenant-people of God.

Unto this covenant God has appointed a token, sign or seal of induction, for a confirmation of the promises on his part, and an obligation to that duty which is their part of the covenant. Circumcision was the seal of induction unto *Abraham* and to his seed under the ancient dispensation of the covenant; but since the blood of Jesus Christ has been actually shed for the remission and purgation of sin, that bloody ordinance is done away, and baptism is, by divine appointment, the badge of all the disciples of Christ, and the introduction into the visible church. Therefore all those that receive the doctrine, and submitted to the institution of John Baptist; he baptized with water, as the manner of the Jews was to admit profelytes, in token of their cleansing themselves by repentance and reformation. This pointed to the baptism which our Saviour Jesus Christ afterwards ordained to be the seal of induction into the visible church, under the Christian dispensation,
and

and was the dawn of the gospel-day. And hence Christ having received power from the Father, gave a commission to his apostles, and to all his ordinary ministers, to admit his disciples into the church by the sacred rite of baptism with water, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," as the signal of dedication to God, to be his, and for him, forever. Therefore, when any of the Gentiles or others embraced the Christian religion, and made an open profession of it, they were admitted into the communion of the Christian church, by the ordinance of water-baptism; and not only they, but all theirs. Thus in particular it was, with regard to the instance before us: no sooner did the jailor submit to the laws of Christianity, but he was admitted to its privileges, being baptized, he and all *his* straightway.

Having introduced my text, we might consider that those, who are converted from paganism or judaism, or any other religion, to embrace Christianity in their adult age, have a right to the ordinance of baptism: But as there are none among us that dispute their right, unless it be those that deny water-baptism, it is needless at present. I have only two heads that appear necessary to discourse upon this day to you; in both which I design, by the help of God, to be clear and useful. And O that my blessed Master would stand by me, and give me all the light, simplicity and fortitude, needful to the undertaking, and the occasion of it. In dependence upon his help, I say,

I. "Baptism with water is an ordinance of God, to be continued in the Christian church to
" the

“ the end of the world. ” Some have imagined that baptism with water was nothing but an external ceremony, indulged by the apostles to the first Christians, in condescension to the custom which obtained among the Jews ; and therefore that it is not a command of Christ. But altho’ we shall not deny that there was an usage among the Jews, similar to baptism, a sort of an appendix to circumcision, yet we affirm it was not a sacramental institution, until Christ made it so. But when Christ came, and would introduce a new dispensation of the covenant of grace, he appointed baptism with water to be the seal of initiation, and rejected circumcision, which had been the initiating seal under the former dispensation.

None that will honestly attend to the account given in scripture of this holy ordinance; can possibly doubt whether water is to be used in the administration of it. Will any read the account of our Saviour’s baptism, or of the apostles going unto water, with those that were converted to the Christian faith, to baptize them, and yet pretend a doubt, whether water was used in the administration? or can it be imagined, that when Peter saw the deep impresson which the word had upon the believing Jews and others, and said, “ Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, ” and commanded them to be baptized, ” the element of water was not used in the administration of this holy ordinance? No : the clearest manifestations of divine grace, and the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost conferred upon men, were so far from setting them above water-baptism, that these laid an obligation upon them to submit to it.

it *. Some might have said with regard to the Jews, these have been circumcised, why therefore should they be baptized? but the answer would have been easy; it was because circumcision was abolished, and baptism was the seal of introduction into the Christian church.--Others might have said, since the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost, what need was there of baptizing them with water? but *Peter* virtually teaches us, that water-baptism is the door of admission into the visible church now, as circumcision was formerly. Who then can forbid this plain sign and seal of the covenant unto those that have received the thing signified? when according to promise, God pours out his Spirit upon the Gentiles, and grafts them into the good olive tree, who can forbid this testimony and seal of it?

Neither was this an usage of the first Christians only, but it was instituted for the use of the church in all ages, to the end of the world; as the ordinary medium of gathering and preserving the church, out of every nation and people. This, I apprehend, is evident from the commission which Christ gave the apostles, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you, and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." This commission is given primarily to the apostles, as they laid the foundation of the Christian church. But did it terminate with them? No: it is also given to all ministers of the gospel to the end of the world. God had promised

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a succession

* Acts x. 45---48.

a succession of ministers and churches to the end of time, that the throne and seed of Christ might endure for ever *. When therefore the apostles had laid the foundation of the church, ordinary ministers were appointed to build it up. To this end Christ hath given "pastors and teachers" †, by whose ministry he might disciple and instruct men in the Christian faith, till all the elect among all nations, "come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." God was able to do this, without the instrumentality of any man, or order of men; but it has pleased him to appoint a succession of ministers, thereby to beget esteem, love, and reverence to his gospel. And these ministers he has commanded to charge all men, to observe all things whatsoever Christ commanded them. And was not this one thing that Christ had commanded, *viz.* that they should baptize all meet subjects, and so bring them under the bonds of the covenant? If they were to teach them to observe all things enjoined, they were not only to teach them all the duties of the moral law, but all the ordinances of the gospel, one of which is baptism, as appears from the words of our Saviour Jesus Christ in the commission.— And it is evident that the apostles understood it to be a standing ordinance in the church; for they not only administered it themselves after the ascension of Christ, but others, by their appointment, admitted members into the church by that solemn rite †. And indeed, the reason of the thing supposes

* Isaiah lix. 21. † Eph. iv. 11. 13. † Acts xvi. 14, 15, 33. with 1 Cor. i. 14, 15, 16.

poses the continuance of this ordinance in the Christian church; for if God has renewed his covenant of grace under the Christian dispensation, and established it upon clearer promises, why is it not as necessary to seal the covenant by water-baptism now, as it was in the beginning of the Christian state?

But, I apprehend, enough has been offered, to prove that baptism with water is an ordinance of God, to be administered and received in all ages, to the end of time. And hence it follows, that “those are under a judicial infatuation, who, professing to have great measures of light and grace, deny the sacraments of the New Testament, and particularly that of baptism with water.” It is a great sin for any, to set light by any holy institution of Christ; and still a greater sin to deny one, under a pretence of great measures of light and spirituality. Nor can we with any good reason suppose, that those who deny this ordinance in particular; under a notion of spirituality, are not deluded; for the Spirit of God never teaches any man contrary to the written word. Our Saviour teaches us, that it is a thing not to be imagined, that Satan should fight against himself, because that would ruin his kingdom*; and methinks men must put out their eyes in order to believe, that the Spirit of God should teach one thing in the written word, and the contrary by his influences on the heart, because that would be opposing himself. How then can we find grounds to think, that those are influenced by the same spirit that indited the scrip-

* Mat. xii. 26, 27.

scriptures, who cry down outward ordinances, which are plainly enjoined in the scriptures? What reason can be assigned, why men should believe that such wild imaginations ought to be esteemed of equal authority with the writings of our Saviour and his apostles? truly, no reason at all: but we ought, in honour to God and his written word, to judge that all such persons are under strong delusions; left to themselves: and if they continue under such delusions, we cannot safely think but they “hate the light” of the gospel, and wilfully refuse to come to the light, lest their consciences should reprove them: for, if they were true Israelites, they would receive the written revelation, “not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which worketh effectually” in all them that believe.

But we must hasten to the main thing in view, which is to consider,

II. That “the infants of such as are members of the visible church, have a right to baptism.” Had the church of Christ in this place, and in the neighbourhood, been left to their Christian practice, agreeable to scripture and primitive usage, it might have saved me this labour, and prevented many mischiefs, which, I fear, will come upon you. But the late innovations that have been palmed upon you, I look upon as a providential call to stand in this place, for the defence of the right of infant baptism. And tho’ the church might have had greater benefit by an abler hand, yet, as an affectionate friend to the truth, I hope God will own me while I honestly endeavour to support his sinking

ing cause. Let us give an unbiaſſed attention to ſome evidences that may be offered, to ſhow the right of infant baptiſm. And I deſire you would hear me patiently and carefully upon every argument, that if one ſhould not be ſatisfying, perhaps, another may; if light does not convince you this morning, it may in the afternoon.

ARG. I. “ If the infants of viſible believers do
 “ alſo belong to the viſible church themſelves, then
 “ they are to be baptized: but the infants of vi-
 “ ſible believers are alſo members of the viſible
 “ church themſelves: therefore the infants of vi-
 “ ſible believers are to be baptized.”

That all might fully underſtand my meaning, I deſire it might be obſerved, that by infants belonging to, or being members of the viſible church, I do not intend that they have the badge or ſeal of their membership put upon them when they are firſt born, but in a qualified ſenſe they are members: as a ſon born in the army is the king’s ſoldier, or a child born in the king’s dominions is the king’s ſubject; tho’ the former is not *actually* inliſted, nor the latter *formally* declared to be ſo. So the children of viſible believers are members of the viſible church as ſoon as they are born into the world, before they have the badge of church membership put upon them, or have the ſeal of the covenant put upon them. If a perſon did in no ſenſe at all belong to the viſible church, how could he, with any propriety, have the token of membership put upon him? Is it not in conſequence of a perſon’s being a viſible member, that he has the token put upon him, which is the com-
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mon right of all visible members, and by which token or mark they are distinguished from others? And is not baptism the token of visible membership, by which Christ would have his visible church distinguished from the rest of the world? I presume none of our neighbours who deny infant baptism, will pretend that there is any other way of admission into the visible church, either from precept or example, since Jesus Christ appointed this holy ordinance. But if they should pretend some other way, they may see themselves mistaken, by considering, that all the admissions we read of, since baptism was a divine institution, were by this token or seal of the covenant. As evidence of this, I would refer them to the three thousand*, to Simon Magus and the eunuch†, to Paul‡, to Stephanus and his household**, to Lydia, the Jailer, and their household§. All these were brought into the church by the seal of baptism; and I believe none can tell of any other way.—Nor have we any warrant, from the word of God, to delay the administration of this ordinance to such as are members, until they are indoctrinated in the Christian faith, and are capable of understanding the nature of the ordinance. All the scripture examples of admission are levelled against delays. No sooner did those already mentioned belong to the visible church, but they were baptized. Nor can any man living prove, that all these were adult persons: no; so far from it, that there is no reason to think they were so, but much reason to believe the contrary. But whether they were, or were not, we are assured that it is the will of God, that disciples
of

* Acts ii.

† chap. viii.

‡ chap. ix.

** I Cor. i. 6.

§ Acts xvi.

of Christ should be baptized without delay, as we shall consider by and by.

In the mean time, what is mainly before me, upon this argument, is to prove, "That infants of visible believers or church members, are all so themselves members of the visible church, and therefore ought to have the seal of induction put upon them." And this, I apprehend, will appear to every unprejudiced mind, by a careful attendance to a few things, such as these following, *viz.*

I. "God never made a covenant with man, but what included his seed." We have two covenants represented to us in the holy scripture, *viz.* a covenant of *works* and a covenant of *grace*; and in both these God has covenanted with man and his seed.

Thus God entered into a covenant of works with *Adam* and his seed. *Adam* was the root of all mankind, and his posterity were the branches. God entered into a covenant of life with him, binding him and his posterity unto himself, with this condition, "he that doth these things shall live of them." And all his seed being in him as their covenant-head, fell with him in the first transgression. His act was imputed to them; his guilt was imputed to them, so that as soon as his posterity are born into the world, they are condemned. The whole nature of man then subsisted in *Adam*, and his enormous crimes tainted his blood. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have

“ have sinned.” As the blessings offered in this covenant to *Adam* and his seed, would have been secured to them had he continued in his integrity, so the curse falls upon all his posterity by his disobedience; no sooner are they human creatures, but they are morally defiled and guilty creatures. “ How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed?”

Upon the apostasy, God entered into a covenant of grace to deliver men out of an estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer. This covenant of grace was primarily and principally with the Lord Jesus Christ as the second *Adam*: and therefore he is called the surety of the covenant of grace, to adjust and make up the difference between God and his people. But altho’ the covenant of grace is primarily made with Christ, as the representative of his seed, yet, in him, it is made with believers or with his seed. Hence they are said “ to enter into covenant *;” to “ keep covenant †;” to “ break the covenant ‡;” and many such like expressions; shewing that the covenant of grace is made with believers.—And parents that are believers, have their children taken into covenant with them. Whenever God has taken parents into his family and kingdom, he has taken in their children with them, and has reckoned them a part of his family. Therefore all the people of Israel, young and old, male and female, are called “ the children of the Lord your God **;” adopted children, owned by God as his people; a people near to him, set apart for him. Hence, God directed Moses to say unto Pharaoh, “ Israel

* Ps. l. 5. † Ps. xxv. 10. ‡ Lev. xxvi. 15. ** Deut. xiv. 1.

“ Israel is my Son, even my first-born *;” precious in my sight, and dear to me, tho’ there were many in Israel that were enemies to God and children of the devil; but were taken into covenant in the right of their parents, and, in that sense, “ beloved for their father’s sake.”

I am sensible that Antimonians will object and say, “ That it is not possible for a person to be “ under the covenant of grace and the covenant “ of works at the same time; to be precious in “ the sight of God, and yet haters of God; to be “ children of the devil, and children of God at “ once. How then can the preceeding account “ be reconciled?”

In answer to this objection; I grant, that as to the *state* of persons, all are either renewed or unrenewed; in a state of nature or in a state of grace: they belong either to the first or the second *Adam*. “ It is as impossible for a person to be under both covenants at once, as it is for a man to be born of two mothers.” For the terms of the covenants are directly opposite to each other: and therefore, if a person is admitted into the covenant of grace, by effectual calling, he is certainly cut off from the covenant of works; for “ if it is by grace” that a person is saved, “ then it is no more of works; o- “ therways grace is no more grace. But if it be “ of works, then it is no more grace: otherways “ work is no more work.”—But this hinders not but a person may be in a graceless state, and yet enjoy many and great external privileges of the church, which belong to those whom God has
C separated

separated to himself, to make known his name among them. Tho' outward privileges avail nothing to special grace, any further than means of God's appointing; yet they are privileges, and do advance people above others, which some are favoured with, as stewards, to improve and transmit to others. Paul reckoned the privileges of the Jewish church very great; even those that were external*. To be dignified and distinguished by visible church privileges; to have the symbols of the divine presence; the word and sacraments; to enjoy the means of grace, and be separated from others as the covenant-people of God; is a very great favour. Now, all these privileges did belong to the body of the Jews, of all ages, as the covenant-people of God; even to them that never received any saving benefit by them, as well as others. It is one thing to inherit the saving grace of the covenant, and another to enjoy the outward privileges of it. All the seed of visible believers have a right to many of the external privileges of the covenant, and it is the duty of parents to claim these privileges for them.

II. "The Abrahamick covenant, including the seed of visible believers, is the covenant of grace." The words express it with so much clearness, that none who have any tolerable understanding of the two covenants, and read with unprejudiced attention, can doubt whether it be the covenant of grace. "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in your generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee †." It

* Rom. ix. 4.

† Gen. xvii. 7.

It was a covenant never to be revoked; fixed and ratified as firm as the divine power and truth could make it. It was a covenant settled, with regard to the rule of descent; not to him, and then die; but to him, and his seed after him, in their generations. Besides, God makes over HIMSELF to Abraham and to his seed in this covenant, which he never has done in the covenant of works, since man's apostasy. And having settled the tenor of the covenant, he confirmed and ratified it by the ceremony of circumcision, the sealing ordinance under that dispensation. This Paul tells us, "was a seal of the righteousness of faith *;" or justification by faith; and the righteousness of faith and that of works are opposites, and therefore cannot belong to one and the same covenant.

I am sensible, that some have devised several schemes, to evade the force of plain scripture evidence in this matter. But if they should say that it was "a covenant to secure the land of Canaan unto Abraham and his posterity," as some pretend; then I would ask them, how it comes to pass that the seal of the covenant was administered to proselytes, seeing no stranger had any right to the land of Canaan †? And altho' God promised Canaan; yet was this the principal and most valuable part of the promise; or, *I will be a God to thee, and thy seed after thee?* Do not those that make such an evasion as this, discover very mean and despicable thoughts of the glorious God, and of the heavenly Canaan; and an excessive value for an earthly inheritance?—Some again call it a mixt covenant, partly of works, and partly of grace; and sometimes

* Rom. iv. 11. † Exod. xii. 48.

sometimes a covenant of works only. But the apostle Paul abundantly disproves this absurd notion, by urging the stability of the covenant which God made with Abraham. Tho' Abraham and the prophets are dead, the covenant is still of force, and can never be vacated; and why? because Christ abides for ever in his person, and in his members*. And if any should object, that the law which was given by Moses could disannul the covenant, under a notion of its being a covenant of works, the apostle says, that the subsequent law could not disannul the precedent covenant, and establish a different way of justification, from that which was settled by the covenant of grace; but the great design of both the moral and ceremonial law too, was to subserve the covenant which was made with Abraham; as it was adapted to convince men of their undone condition, and the insufficiency of their own righteousness to commend them to God, and to point out Christ; the sacrifice of atonement for the expiation of sin †. If this is not the plain sense of the apostle, why are believers called "Abraham's seed ‡?" why are they called heirs according to the promise? how come they "blessed with faithful Abraham**?" and how came the blessing of Abraham to descend upon the Gentiles?

If these things are duly considered, I think it will be very evident, that the Abrahamick covenant was the covenant of grace; and for that reason it is called an everlasting covenant, being so in its duration.

III. "The

* Gal. iii. 17, 18. † See Gal. iii. 19, 24. ‡ ver. 29.
** Gal. iii. 9, 14.

III. "The grant in the Abrahamick covenant, made to his seed, has never been repealed." If, by divine appointment, the gift of church membership, and the token of the covenant, did belong to the infants of visible believers, under the former dispensation of the covenant of grace, and if the same law or rule abides in force still; then the infants of believers under the present dispensation of the covenant, have an equal right now, and ought to be admitted by the seal of the covenant. But this gift has never been repealed: God has no where in his holy word reversed this order; no where taken away this privilege. God has changed the token of induction, but not the subjects: there is not the least intimation that the infant seed of visible believers are "cast out of the covenant, or cut off from the privilege of having it sealed to them." But, on the contrary, the visible administration and blessings belong to visible believers and their seed. And this, I apprehend, is abundantly evident, from the eleventh chapter to the *Romans*. For in that chapter the apostle is treating of the rejection of the Jews from a visible church state, for their unbelief manifested in rejecting Christ, and of the goodness and mercy of God expressed with his severity therein. Many of the Jewish nation did entertain Christ; a remnant obtained righteousness and life by him: but the main body of them rejected him; they shut their eyes and would not see, and then God in righteous judgment blinded their eyes that they could not see, and so were broken off from that visible church state. This indeed seemed harsh doctrine, but if you attend to what is written, it will appear to be the main argument of the apostle in the forepart of the chapter. But to qualify this doctrine

of

of the rejection of the Jews, he says, that tho' they were cast off and unchurched, yet the Gentiles were taken in, and their rejection was not final, but the time would come, when they should be restored to their church state and privileges again. Some of them should remain in their visible church state; "a remnant, according to the election of grace*;" a few chosen vessels he continued in the covenant made with Abraham and his seed. Abraham was the root of the Jewish church; not the root of communication, but the root of administration, "he being the first with whom the covenant was so solemnly made." The olive tree is the visible church; the Lord calls its name a green olive tree†. Tho' we apply it to union with Christ, yet it is spoken of a visible church state. And by the "root and fatness" of the olive tree, we must understand the promises and privileges which belong to the visible church. Now the believing Gentiles partake of this root, and therefore Paul says, "the blessing of Abraham is come upon the Gentiles‡." And hence, "the same fatness of the olive tree, the same for substance, instituted ordinances, and visible church membership of infant seed, which was part of the fatness of the olive tree that the Jews had, cannot be denied to the Gentiles."

Having given the general meaning of the apostle, let us reason upon it in the manner following, *viz.* If some only were broken off, then the grant of church membership is not repealed, as to them and their seed that remained, or were not broken off: but *Paul* assures us, that some only were broken off:

it

* Gal. iii. 5.

† Jer. xi. 16.

‡ Gal. iii. 14.

it follows therefore by invincible consequence, that the grant of church membership remains unrepealed to them that were ^{not} broken off. It was one evident design of the apostle to prove, that the rejection of the Jews was not total. The most of them rejected Christ, and therefore were broken off from a visible church state and its external privileges; but a remnant according to the election of grace remained. Now, I say, if some only were broken off, then to them that remain, the right of church membership and its privileges remain unrepealed.

But, will any pretend that all infants were among the number that were broken off? this indeed would not be more absurd, than some things that I have met with instead of argument. But I desire such would consider the apostle's reasoning in the chapter referred to, and they may easily see that he is quite against them. As children come into a visible church state in the right of their parents, so they are not cast out while their parents continue members of the visible church, unless, by their own actual sins, they cut themselves off. Further, consider what *Paul* says, "because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith*." Now if it was not an act of mere sovereignty, that some were broken off from a church state and its privileges, but for their unbelief; then the believing Jews and their seed were not broken off; therefore the state and privileges remain to them, and to their seed; *i. e.* they are not repealed; or otherways the infants of believing Jews were broken off, for the unbelief of other men.

Now,

* Gal. iii. 20.

Now, says *Paul*, the rejection of the Jews made room for the Gentiles ; the wild olive tree was, contrary to nature, grafted into the true olive* ; the true church, from which the unbelieving Jews had been broken off, and this church received sap and virtue from the root. And if this is really the case ; if the Gentiles are grafted into the same church, from which the Jews were broken off, then the infants have the same right of church membership that theirs had ; and therefore the right of church membership is not taken away from the infants of believing Gentiles.

ARG. II. " IT is the will of God that the disciples of Christ should be baptized ; but the infants of visible believers, or of such as are members of the visible church, are disciples of Christ ; therefore it is the will of God that they should be baptized."

The first proposition of this argument is founded upon the words of our Lord Jesus, in his commission to ministers : " Go, teach all nations, baptizing them—teaching them, &c." together with *Paul's* words, " the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen thro' faith, preached before the gospel unto *Abraham*, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful *Abraham*." From hence observe, 1st, That ministers of Christ are sent to teach people the covenant which God made with *Abraham*. The promise was made to *Abraham* and his seed ; and ministers are bound to teach the whole of the covenant,

* Gal. iii. 16, 17.

venant, of which this is one part ; and they are also to baptize, or administer the seal of induction, unto all who embraced Abraham's covenant ; none might be excepted. *2d*, All nations were to be taught this covenant. The same which had been confined to one nation ; *i. e.* the covenant with its privileges, is now extended to all nations that shall receive the faith. The commission is, to make all nations disciples, that were willing to enter into Christ's school ; and such should be the people of God, as the Jews had been in time past. Whereas before one nation only was God's covenant-people, now Christ would have other nations taken in likewise : before this they were forbid going to the Gentiles or Samaritans ; but now their commission extends to all nations. *3d*, The first work that ministers have to do, is to disciple, or enter nations into Christ's school. When the nation of the Jews were made disciples, they were circumcised ; and the first thing the apostles and ministers of Christ have in charge, is to baptize and to teach : Go ye, make disciples, to me out of all nations, by baptizing and teaching ; and the way of making disciples, was entering into a school : In this sense, Joseph of Arimathea became one of Christ's disciples, not because he was one that had been trained up under his ministry before, but that he might be taught by him.

The second proposition in this argument is, that the infants of visible believers, are the disciples of Christ. This, I apprehend, every one must yield to be true, who impartially considers *Peter's* expressly calling them so. “ Why tempt ye God, “ to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples,

D

“ which

“ which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear*.” The controversy referred to in this scripture, respects the circumcising the Gentile profelytes. “ Certain of the Pharisees rose up, and insisted that it was necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of *Moses*.” Tho’ they embraced the faith of Christ, yet many of them continued very zealous for circumcision, and urged it upon the Gentiles as necessary to salvation. This was what raised the dissension and disputation with them ; and this was what *Peter* sharply reproved those judaizing teachers for, as a matter so plain, that he could not but speak of it with some warmth. “ Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples.” But what yoke was this? why, it was the yoke, of circumcision : they would impose circumcision upon the believing Gentiles and their seed, as it had been used among the Jews. The ceremonial law was a heavy yoke, which they would have laid upon the neck of the Gentiles, which Christ came to free both Jews and Gentiles from. And *Peter*, in his address to the assembly, tells those Pharisees, that they did, in effect, prescribe to God, in attempting to lay this yoke upon the neck of the disciples. In this address, he evidently calls the infant seed of believing Gentiles, disciples ; for the greatest part of any nation are children ; and it was not only adult believing Gentiles, but their male-children that they would have imposed this yoke upon. Hence, if all the disciples of Christ are to be baptized, and the children of believing parents are disciples, it necessarily follows, that such children are to be baptized. They

are

* Acts xv. 10.

are visible disciples ; they visibly belong to the school of Christ, are a part of his family and visible kingdom, and therefore may and ought to be baptized.

Some indeed, whose faculty is to make plain truth dark, may pretend that Peter, by disciples, meant only adult persons. But he that runs may read the apostle's meaning : for it was those very disciples on whom the judaizing teachers would have imposed the yoke of circumcision. And this yoke they would have imposed on the brethren, spoken of in the series of his discourse. And it is as evidently God's will, that the infants of visible believers should be baptized, as it is his will that disciples should be baptized ; for God honours them with the name of disciples.

ARG. III. " Those children that are federally holy, are to be baptized : but the infants of visible believers are federally holy :—therefore the infants of visible believers are to be baptized."

Perhaps no sectary, that allows Christian sacraments, will deny, that federal holiness gives a visible right to baptism. But if any should deny this, I would ask them what does give a visible right ? If it be answered, a profession of faith : I would further ask whether that is not a profession of federal holiness ?—And besides, it might be well to consider, that God first covenanted with Abraham, that he would be a God to him and his seed, and then ordered the seal of that dispensation of the covenant of grace to be put upon them. 'Tis for that
reason

reason God called Israel “ a holy people* ;” he had chosen them for his covenant-people, and distinguished them from all other people in the world. Probably there were very few of them that were savingly converted to God at that time, for they had given but very poor evidences of such a great change: but God had separated them to himself, to be his peculiar people, above all nations upon the earth. He set his tabernacle in the midst of them: they had the symbols of his presence, his holy oracles and holy ordinances, and all the privileges of a visible church. And those that were thus federally holy, were to be circumcised. Now, if baptism comes in the room of circumcision, then those that are federally holy ought to be baptized: But baptism has the same respect unto federal holiness under the gospel, that circumcision had under the law. Circumcision was a sign of belonging to God’s household, and of having a right to the privileges of the covenant, and so is baptism †. Circumcision signified putting off the sins of the flesh, and so does baptism ‡. Paul, in his epistle to the Colossians, “ sets baptism in the same state, and makes “ it of the same use to us, that circumcision was to the Jews.” So that those who are federally holy, ought to be baptized, as well as those that were the covenant-people of God, under the ancient dispensation, ought to be circumcised.

Well, “ The infants of visible believers are federally holy.” Tho’ real qualifications are not propagated, yet relative privileges are; for, “ if
“ the

* Deut. vii. 6. chap. xiv. 2. and xxvi. 19. Jer. ii. 3. † Exod. xii. 43, 44. Acts ii. 41. ‡ Col. ii. 11. Acts xxii. 16. Tit. iii. 5.

“ the root be holy, so are the branches*.” Tho’ grace doth not run in the blood, yet external privileges do, even to a thousand generations, unless they are forfeited. This Paul seems very clearly to point out, in the reasons of the direction and advice he gives converts to Christianity, who were married to infidels. “ The unbelieving husband “ is sanctified by the believing wife, and the un- “ believing wife is sanctified by the believing hus- “ band, else were their children unclean, but “ now are they holy †.” All the difficulty that I know of, is to fix, or rightly to state, what sort of holiness the apostle now speaks of: and there appears to me very little, if any, difficulty, in doing this.

Surely, the apostle, by holiness, cannot mean a *principle of grace* in the husband; for it is a holiness that is conveyed from the parents. Tho’ parents be ever so holy, they cannot propagate real holiness to their seed. The graces of the Spirit cannot be conveyed from one to another by natural generation. “ Not of the will of the flesh, “ nor of the will of man, but of God ‡.” We do not become the real children of God, by being born of godly parents. ’Tis the Spirit of God that is the great and sole efficient of regeneration. But the holiness referred to, is that which comes upon the child through the faith of the parent, whether he be really, or only visibly a believer. Besides, it is a holiness that may be lost: “ be- “ cause of unbelief they may be broken off:” they cut themselves off by unbelief: and when parents are broken off, or cast out of the visible church,

* Rom. xi. 16. Henry in loc. † 1 Cor. vii. 14. ‡ John i. 13.

church, God cuts off their children from the holiness spoken of. Now, this cannot be said of a state of saving grace; for those that have a principle of grace in their hearts, shall abide for ever.

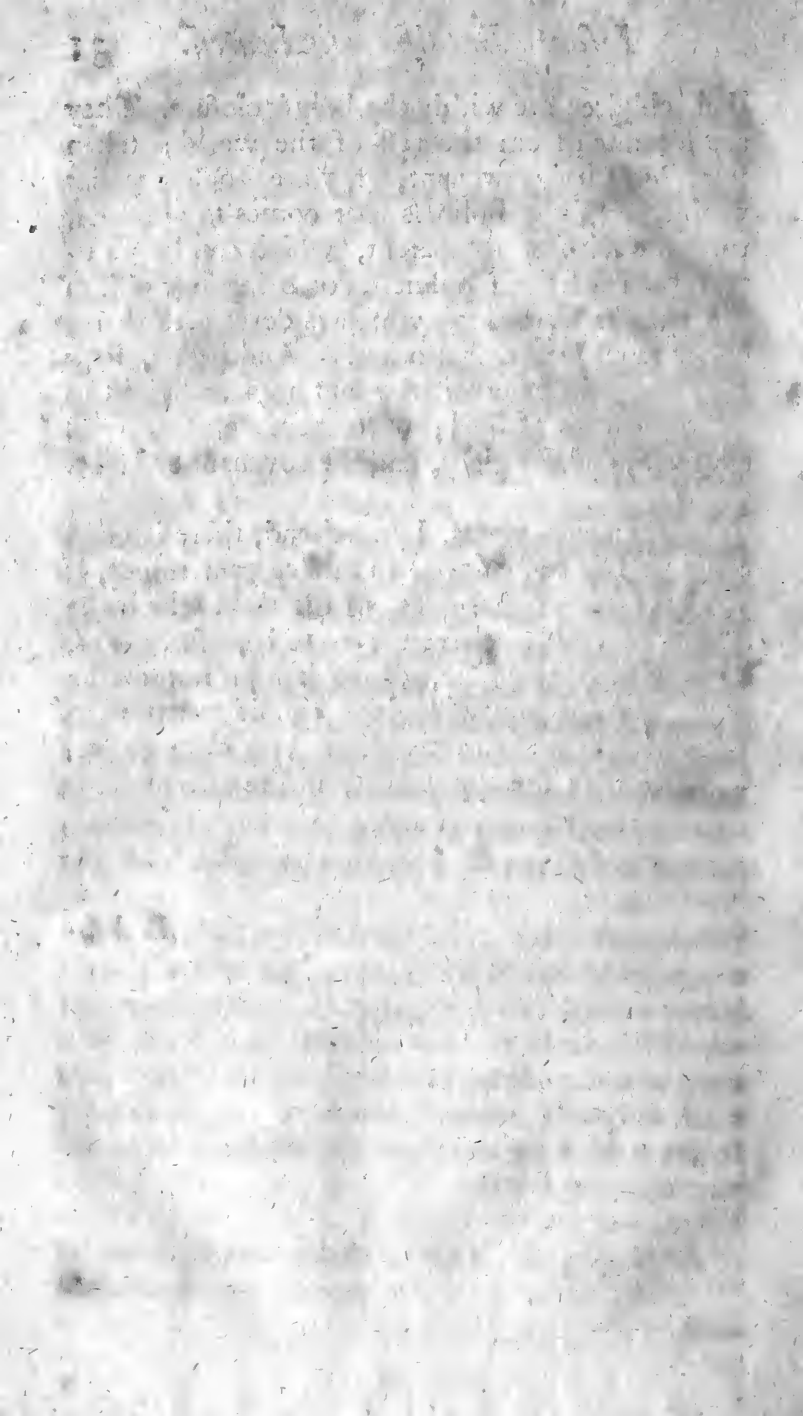
Nor can the apostle mean a *matrimonial holiness*. For, a lawful birth has no dependence upon the faith of parents. Marriages were as lawful among the heathen as among others: and where a marriage is lawful, the children are legitimate, even tho' the parents are heathen. And, on the other hand, a child may be a bastard, and is so, if not begotten in lawful marriage, tho' it should be supposed that both the parents are believers. The reality and lawfulness of these relations, is not founded in grace, nor in a profession of faith. A father is as truly a father, a husband as lawfully a husband, tho' he has no grace, as the most holy man in the world. Grace adds nothing to the truth, or lawfulness of any relation whatsoever, tho' it adds much to the comfort and right use of all relations of life. Thus, notwithstanding, if both the parents are in a state of heathenism, the children are unclean: but if one of the parents is a believer, the children are holy.

Well, if this holiness is neither a principle of grace in the heart, nor a matrimonial holiness, what can it be but a *federal holiness*? Being infidels, they were out of the pale of the visible church, and their infant seed were common and unclean, in the same sense that heathens in general were stiled unclean: but being believers, and in the visible church, or either of them so, they are distinguished from the world; and therefore their

their children are within the holy inclosure. They are separated from the rest of the world; taken into God's holy covenant; they are God's peculiar people. 'Tis a holiness that comes to children, thro' the faith of the parent, which can be no other than a federal holiness, or being taken into the parents covenant, which is derived to them, either from father or mother. And hence, they have not only a hereditary, but an actual right to the ordinances of God; unto them do pertain the adoption, and the glory, and the covenant of grace.

By these arguments, I apprehend, there is good evidence laid before you, to relieve your minds, if you have had any scruples, of the right which the infants of visible believers have to baptism. Yet, lest any should hesitate, or think it an immaterial point, I hope you will give a candid attention to what may be further offered, by way of evidence, together with the application, in the afternoon.

D I S.



DISCOURSE II.

ACTS XVI. 33.

— *And was baptized, he, and all his, straightway.*

WHERE the doctrine of infant baptism so circumstantial a matter, as some have represented it, I should think the labour and time ill bestowed to insist upon this subject; for nothing is more destructive to true Christianity, than placing it in modes, and firing our zeal about circumstantials. But I look upon this doctrine of great importance; and making light of it a great reflection upon the God of the covenant, and the great privileges contained therein. You need not wonder, therefore, that I should take some pains to vindicate it in this evil day; and if God should break in with his light, for your conviction and establishment in the present truth which has been maintained in these churches, you will not repent your diligent attention to some further evidences. Therefore, with an humble dependence upon divine aid, let us add,

ARG. IV. “ That doctrine which infers all
“ infants to be in the visible kingdom of satan,
E “ is

“ is certainly false doctrine:—but the doctrine
 “ that denies all infants to be members of the vi-
 “ sible church, infers them to be members of the
 “ visible kingdom of satan:—therefore it is false
 “ doctrine.”

The visible kingdom of Christ, and the visible kingdom of satan, divide the world; *i. e.* those that do not belong to the visible kingdom of Christ, do belong to the visible kingdom of satan; for there is no medium; nor can those that belong to the one, belong also to the other. If a child is in the visible kingdom of satan, there cannot be any visible ground of hope of the salvation of that child. The only ground of hope that we can have of the salvation of children, dying in their infancy, is their being in the kingdom of Christ, or being the members of Christ. And the only ground of hope that we can have of their being the members of Christ, by a real and vital union with him, arises from their visible membership; for it is impossible that we can judge of that which is invisible, any other way than by that which is visible.

Now, it is palpably false doctrine, to represent all infants, dying in their infancy, as dying in the visible kingdom of satan; for such doctrine would take away all hope of their being saved. Whereas the word of God gives us good reason to hope for the salvation of some infants, dying in their infancy. Therefore, the word of God gives us good reason to say, that the doctrine which teaches us that all infants, dying in their infancy, die in the visible kingdom of satan, is palpably false doctrine.

This

This argument, is set before us by our Saviour himself, in the welcome he gave some little children that were brought to him. Some of his disciples, probably thought it below their Master, to take notice of little children, brought in their parents or nurses arms, and therefore reprov'd them for being so troublesome. But Christ rectified the mistake they went upon, and said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven*." Hence it is evident, at least, that some little children belong to the kingdom of heaven, and therefore, not to the kingdom of satan. They are members of the visible church, and therefore, to them pertains the privileges of church membership. Consequently, those that deny them the privilege of baptism, do teach false doctrine, virtually saying, that they are all in the visible kingdom of satan, and that there is no visible ground of hope of their salvation, tho' our Saviour says the contrary. Yea, he takes it very ill, of those who forbid them, and shut them out of church privileges.

ARG. V. "That doctrine which renders the
" privileges of the Christian church less, than the
" privileges of the Jewish church, is certainly false
" doctrine:—but the doctrine which excludes the
" infants of visible believers from the initiating
" seal of the covenant of grace, viz. baptism,
" makes the privileges of the Christian church
" less than the privileges of the Jewish church:
" —therefore it is false doctrine."

That

That the infants of visible believers in the Jewish church, had a right, and actually enjoyed the seal of induction into the church, needs nothing further at present, than what has been offered, to prove it.—And it is also evident, if this was a privilege in that church, the privileges of the Christian church would, in that respect, be less than the privileges of the Jewish church, provided the initiating seal of the covenant is denied the children of believing parents under the gospel. But what is more absurd than to suppose this? Paul, when he compares the Old and New Testament dispensation together, shews the superior excellency of the latter to the former. “Even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth*.” He undertook, of set purpose, to show that the privileges of the gospel dispensation, were far greater than the privileges of the legal dispensation of the same covenant of grace. But if the children of visible believers, are denied those external privileges of the covenant, which the children of the Jews enjoyed, then our privileges are less than theirs were, and consequently the Christian dispensation is not so excellent as the legal dispensation. Whereas the apostle not only considers the superior excellency of the present to the former dispensation, on many accounts, in the epistle and chapter just referred to; but elsewhere he assures us, that our privileges are, at least, equal to theirs in the very case under consideration. This he puts beyond all reasonable doubt, by asserting that the Gentile church is grafted in among them that were not broken off; and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive-tree; and so

* 2 Cor. iii. 10.

so, "the blessing of Abraham comes upon the
"Gentiles;" the gospelised Gentiles are received
into the same covenant relation with God, and par-
take of all the covenant privileges, from which the
unbelieving Jews were cut off. Now, in as much
as the Jews had the privilege of sealing the cove-
nant to their children, who can deny the seal of
the covenant to the children of visible believers un-
der the gospel? If this was a privilege to them,
is it not as great a privilege unto us and our chil-
dren? Do not those that deny the children of
Christian parents the seal of the covenant, deny
them a great privilege, which the children of visi-
ble believers enjoyed under the law?—If so, then
surely, this denial is a teaching false doctrine; for
the privileges of the Christian church, and the
grace and comforts of it, are, at least, equal in
these respects; yea, in the whole, they are greater
than those that the Jewish church enjoyed.

ARG. VI. "If it was the approved practice
"of the church in the apostles days, and so down-
"ward, to introduce the children of visible belie-
"vers into the Christian church, by the seal of
"baptism; then the infants of such parents ought
"to be baptized:—but it was the approved prac-
"tice in the time of the apostles, and so down-
"ward, thro' all periods of the church;—there-
"fore the children of such parents ought to be
"baptized."

When Christ and his apostles preached the gos-
pel, they extended the promise or covenant, not
only as to the matter of it, but as to the manner
and form of administration, to visible Christians
and

and their seed. No sooner was Zaccheus approved and declared a Christian himself, but his family also became related to Christ, by virtue of his interest in the covenant. "This day is salvation come to this house, for as much as he also is the son of Abraham*." Before this, tho' a son of Abraham by birth, he was an excommunicate, and the Jews were shy of conversing with him, but being a visible penitent, his family were brought into the church, and entitled to privileges, by virtue of his interest in the covenant which God made with Abraham. Christ applied the promise to his house; *i. e.* to his children, whether young or old; to all his proper household. Upon his profession of faith and repentance, his family became the visible heirs of salvation, and of all the means leading unto it. Here Christ opens the covenant made with Abraham, not only for himself, but for his house; and argues from Zaccheus' being a son of Abraham, that the covenant was not only to him, but to his house *i. e.* his seed. For to what end should his house be mentioned, if the whole salvation spoken of was confined to himself? Would it not be very absurd for Christ, to speak of men and their households, and of salvation coming to them and their houses; and yet, to suppose that he designed to shut out the children of such families from the outward sign of the promise? What a strange policy are they possessed of, who can force themselves to think, that Christ did not hereby intend, that the seed of visible believers should be included in the covenant, though they were included in the darker dispensation of it?—So, when Peter came to Cornelius, he preached the

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covenant to him, with a gracious entail to his house * : he and his children should be taken into covenant, and have the means of salvation. *q. d.* Hitherto salvation has been of the Jews, but now it is to the Gentiles, as much as ever it was to the Jews ; the promises, privileges, and means of it, are conveyed to all nations, as amply and fully, to all intents and purposes, as ever it had been appropriated to the Jewish nation.—So, when the apostle preached to the jailor, and exhorted him to admit the record that God has given of his Son, he assures him that “ he should be saved and his “ house †.” Believe, and salvation shall come to thy house : just as God preached the covenant to Abraham ; “ walk before me, and be thou perfect : and I will establish my covenant between “ me and thee, and thy seed after thee ; to be a “ God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee ‡ :” *i. e.* to thy household. But did the apostle mean that the jailor’s faith should eternally save his household? *Ans.* He meant the same that is meant in the promise given to Abraham and his seed : so that the question would be as proper for any one to ask, whether the promise of being a God to the seed of Abraham, was a promise of eternal life? The utmost intended by these promises is, that they should enjoy the blessings of church privileges, and the external means of salvation ; and on these accounts be distinguished from all others. And herein these promises agree with what Peter says to those who enquired what they should do : his answer is, “ repent and be baptized every one of you, in the “ name of the Lord Jesus Christ. For the promise “ is unto you, and to your children **.” When they

* Acts xi. 14. Henry in loc. † Acts xvi. 31 ‡ Gen. xvii. 1, 7. ** Acts ii. 38, 39.

they were brought into a new dispensation of the covenant of grace by baptism; their children were not to be thrown out, but taken in with them; for the promise, "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed," belonged as much to them and their children, as ever it did to Abraham and his seed. Agreeable to this sense of the promise, we find they baptized households, or families, which may be considered presently.

And this must be understood of the infant seed of visible believers: for, according to the most authentick church history, infant baptism was practised in the days of the apostles, and in the places and churches to whom Paul wrote his epistles. The Christian church was in possession of this privilege, for more than fifteen hundred years from its beginning, as we might make abundantly evident, were it necessary, both from the Greek and Latin fathers. But if it should appear to be the practice of the church in the three first centuries, that will suffice the present purpose. To this end, I refer you to the words of *Origen*, who says, "children are baptized for the remission of sins, &c.*" And again, he says, infants of children were baptized †. To the same purpose I might add the testimony of *Irenæus* and *Cyprian*, who lived about the same time ‡. But I choose to wave private testimonies, in as much as I have the determination of a synod upon this head, not two hundred years after the apostles, wherein was more than threescore bishops. The

* *Parvuli baptizantur in remissionem peccatorum.* And this *Origen* lived about a hundred years after the apostle Paul.

† *Paidia* and *nepia.* ‡ *Irenæus* was bishop of *Lyons*, A. D. 184., *Cyprian* bishop of *Carthage*, A. D. 250.

The occasion of the synod was not because infant baptism had not been an usage of the church, but because it had been from the beginning: but one of the bishops had some scruples about the time of their baptism, whether it might be about the third or fourth day, or whether it should be delayed till the eighth, as it was observed with respect to circumcision. The synodical decree was to this effect** : “ As for the matter of infants, whom
“ you said were not to be baptized within the second or third day after their birth, or according
“ to the law of circumcision within the eighth day
“ thereof, &c. our opinion is, that none ought to
“ be prohibited, especially no infants, tho’ but just
“ born, &c.” And this agrees with what other particular renowned writers have said, that the church had all along the possession of the privilege of baptizing infants: and also with what the pious and judicious Calvin, who was well versed in antiquity, hath said, *viz.* “ I affirm that this holy
“ ordinance of infant baptism, hath been perpetually observed in the Christian church; for there
“ is no ancient doctor, that doth not acknowledge
“ that infant baptism was constantly administered
“ by the apostles.” And if, in controverted cases, the constant practice of the church is the best interpreter of the law of Christ, the dispute must be at an end; for it always has been the practice of the church, to initiate the infants of believers by baptism, even from the first constituting a church at Rome by the apostle Paul, according to most credible account; and it has never failed to this day,
F. tho’

** *Quantum vero ad causam infantium pertinet, quos dixisti intra secundum vel tertium diem quo nati sint constitutos baptizari non oportere, &c.*

tho' a number rose up fiercely against it, in Germany, after the church had possessed it more than fifteen hundred years in a good measure of quietness.

These arguments, my brethren, tho' very imperfectly handled, are such as I am ^{not} able to answer, and I hope will prove satisfying to every honest enquirer after the truth, in the present debate among you. Yet, lest any should still doubt, I will briefly answer one or two thread-bare objections urged against our Christian practice.

Object. I. " Our adversaries plead, as they say, " for believers baptism; and they argue to this effect, *viz.* infants are not capable of faith: but " there is no warrant to baptize any, but those " that profess their faith in Christ; and therefore " no infants may be baptized."

Ans. I. " This objection is of as much weight " against circumcising children, under the legal, as " against baptizing them under the Christian dispensation of the covenant of Grace." Is the visibility of faith necessary for the baptism of adult persons? so was the visibility of faith necessary to the circumcision of the adult under the law: " a " seal of the righteousness of faith*," which they had, " yet being uncircumcised." But what doth this argue more than that those who are grown to years of discretion, and have not had the seal of the covenant put upon them, must make a profession of their faith before they are baptized? But if the infants of visible believers were capable of receiving the seal of the covenant, under the former dis-

* Rom. iv. 11. HENRY in loc.

dispensation, how they can be cast out or denied the seal under the present dispensation, without warrant, I confess, is quite beyond my discernment. If they were taken into covenant of old, and had the seal of the covenant put upon them, and the same covenant is continued, with all its privileges, by what severe sentence they are rejected and incapacitated, those ^{un}happy people are concerned to make out, who not only reject, but nullify and reproach the baptism of the seed of believers.

Ans. II. “ We preach the same covenant, and “ practise as the apostles in this regard have done.” Adult persons, in order to admission in the church by the seal of the covenant, have been visible believers under both dispensations. And when we preach publickly, or in private conversation, to those that belong not to the church, but live in a state of Gentilism; we preach the same doctrine that the apostles preached upon this head. So we should preach, were we sent to the scattered tribes of Israel in *America*, now the poor savages of the wilderness: were we the happy instruments sent among the poor Indians, to turn them from their false divinations, and superstitious usages, to follow a divine revelation of unquestionable verity, we should insist upon the same doctrine that the apostles insisted upon; and when any of them believed in the Saviour, and repented of their sins and were baptized, and so became members of the visible church, we should treat them just as the apostles did. We should tell them that the same day salvation came to their houses; that a church membership was conveyed to their children, and they were included in the privileges of the covenant with themselves. I
am

am sensible our adversaries deny this; and let them shew me a warrant for their excluding the infants of such, and I will join them: but since Christ and his apostles have resolved this matter in favour of our principles and practice, they must allow us to adhere to their testimony, as worthy of credit. If parents, making a profession of faith, do not, in that way, bring in their children with them, then surely our blessed Saviour missed it, when he told Zaccheus, that that day salvation was come to his house; for as much as he, a poor publican, was now interested in that covenant which God made with Abraham. If parents, thus believing, do not bring in their children, then Peter missed it, in saying to believing penitents, "the promise is unto you, and to your children." Yea, if this is not the case, Paul missed it, when he said to the Galatians, that "the blessing of Abraham came upon the Gentiles." If what the Anabaptists say is true, these, and many other texts of scripture must be rased out of the bible; for it will not do to receive them as infallible truth; because, upon their principles, they are evidently false. But if, on the other hand, what Christ and his apostles have said about the matter be true, the unavoidable consequence of it will be, that the infants of visible believers are to be baptized.

Yet still, tho' this might serve for an answer, they go on and object, *2dly*, that "There is no express command or example for baptizing infants."

Ans. I. "What if we should reject some other duties, with a confident assertion that there is no express command for them?" Can they show

show us any express command or example for women to receive the Lord's supper? and if they cannot, why do they admit them? We grant, that by scripture consequence, they ought to be admitted to the Lord's table: but where will they find an express command for it? If we were disposed to wrangle, we might easily say, where is the express command or example to bear them out in admitting women to the Lord's table? And again, where is the express command or example for the religious observance of the Lord's day, instead of the old seventh day sabbath? Or, where is the command or example in the New Testament, for holding publick lectures on week days? Let these questions be fully resolved, and I hope that I have offered you as much light for infant baptism, as they can bring for their practice in these points. But

Ans. II. " We have an express command, which
" has never been reversed, to administer the initi-
" ating seal of the covenant, to the children of vi-
" sible believers." We don't say that the com-
mand is in these words, " Go and baptize the chil-
" dren of all my covenant-people;" or that " the
" apostles did certainly baptize the infants of be-
" lieving parents." But no man that enjoys the
blessing of a sound mind, and is not blinded by er-
ror and prejudice, can say that we have no good
warrant for baptizing the infant seed of visible be-
lievers. For, we have a command to administer
the seal of the covenant to the infants of believers:
and this command has never been reversed; and
therefore it is still in force, and not only warrants,
but obliges us to administer the initiating seal of
the covenant to such infants, which, under the
present

present dispensation, is baptism. And were there ever so many dispensations of the same covenant of grace, and a new seal of introduction to each new dispensation, the subjects must remain the same, unless God had excluded them. Nor have we the least reason to imagine, but that the apostles observed the command, in administering the seal of the covenant, to the children of believing parents, with constant exactness. For altho' it is not said in these very words, "they baptized the infant seed of believing parents," yet we are assured of it by words that are equivalent: for we are told that they baptized households or families; Lydia and her household, Stephanus and his household, the jailor and his household, &c. And these accounts, to an impartial mind, I think, must be equivalent to the plainest assertions: for in the scriptures, the terms *house* and *household*, are constantly used to signify the children of the house*. Now, to what possible end should the apostles, when speaking of baptism, borrow a phrase used in all languages, particularly in the Old Testament, to signify the children of a house, unless it were to signify that there were children in that house? Doubtless, if a missionary to the Indians should write us, that he had baptized such an Indian and his house; and another should write us, that he had baptized the head of such a family, and all his, we should very readily understand them. Yea, I cannot think that even an Anabaptist could easily mistake such accounts, after all the prejudices they have imbibed against our doctrine and practice. And if he should
say,

* Gen. xxx. 30. chap. xlv. 18, 19. Numb. iii. 15. Psal. cxv. 12, 13. Besides many other texts which teach us the same truth.

say, that it is possible these families had no infants in them; we may claim a right to say it is possible, yea, highly probable they had; not only because households usually contain, and families are made up in part of children; but also because children were included in the covenant with their parents, and have never been cut off.

A P P L I C A T I O N.

Use I. Learn hence, “something of the evil and danger of Anabaptist principles and their practice agreeable thereto.” I do not desire to represent them in a false light; and hope to be kept from a censorious spirit in all that I say of them. I am sensible they generally disavow the name of Anabaptists, though we constantly, and with good reason, say it belongs to them. For they not only deny the right of infant baptism; but baptize over again those that have already been baptized. They deny that the children of visible Christians have a visible right in the covenant with their parents, and take parents into covenant without their children; because, say they, it is every man’s own faith must make him a son of Abraham. But these things, I humbly apprehend, are sinful and dangerous principles and practices. For,

I. “It is setting up a covenant that God never made;” a mere human device; a contrivance to take in parents without respect to their children. And this is such a covenant which is without scripture foundation: for God never made a covenant, in any one instance, with parents, without including

ding children. The covenant of life was not only with Adam, but for all his posterity; and after the apostasy, as soon as God entered into a covenant of grace, the promise was unto parents and their children. And therefore Eve was called, “the mother of all living *;” not so much because all mankind should descend from her, as because she was to be a covenant mother, as Abraham was the covenant father of us all. So, God made the covenant with Noah and with his seed after him, both before and after the flood †. So when the church of God was in great distress, she is put in mind of the covenant which God entered into with Abraham and his seed, for her support and encouragement; intimating that he still remembered that covenant, and would be a God to his people and their children, under all their distresses ‡. And so David triumphs in the covenant that God made with Abraham, which was renewed with David and his seed. And after the rejection of the Jews, the same covenant was continued, as we have observed in arguing upon the important subject.—The Gentiles were grafted into the same root, and that root was Abraham and his covenant, in the sense already explained; for which cause he is called the father of the Gentiles **. And it is for this very reason that the apostle said, “The promise is unto all that were afar off, and to their children, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” This promise pointed to the call of the Gentiles into a church state. And when the Jews shall be gathered in again, they shall be brought, they and their children, into the same covenant, out

* Gen. iii. 20. † Gen. vi. 18. ch. ix. 8, 9. ‡ Isa. li. 1, 2, 3.
** Rom. iv. 16.

out of which they were cast. Indeed, the scriptures speak of no covenant, that God has entered into with man, which doth not comprehend or take in children with their parents. And therefore a covenant that excludes the children of covenant parents, is a covenant of man's, and not of God's making. Now, would it not be well for those that change and cut off such an essential part of the covenant, to consider seriously, whether it is not more than a mere circumstance, thus to pervert God's order in his covenant? Uzzah's offence in touching the ark, when it was in the way to the city of David, seemed to be very small. The design of it seemed plausible to shew his willingness to promote the publick good: but the matter of order in which he undertook to promote this good was so offensive, that the Lord smote Uzzah with sudden death, as a testimony of his displeasure against him. And if a matter of order is so great in the sight of God, what is it to mutilate the covenant of God? It is a great sin to neglect or change the ordinances of God: but it is still a greater sin to change the everlasting covenant, the Abrahamick covenant, which is the foundation of ordinances. Tho' I charitably think some serious people have done this, for want of due consideration, yet I know of no way of sinning more dangerous; no way more likely to settle men down in a false hope, than to change the covenant God hath made with his people. Did men rightly consider the distinction which the scripture makes between the visible and invisible church, it might prevent this evil; but the pride and presumption of the heart draw them away to assume the divine prerogative, and

to take that work upon themselves which belongs to Christ only*.

II. “ Denying the right of baptism to the children of believing parents is a great injury done to them.” For, they are hereby cut off from that covenant and the privileges of it, which God has grafted them into; and are put into or placed in the same condition with the children of the heathen world, altho’ our Saviour reckons them the members of his visible church. And is it not a dangerous thing to deny the covenant and its privileges to those to whom they belong? Is it not offending against those little ones, unto whom doth appertain the privileges of visible church membership? It is doubtless very offensive to God for his people to tolerate the admission of profane persons into the church, or tamely to suffer them in the church if they are admitted; and I am persuaded the neglect of the holy ordinance of church discipline, is the ready way to make the name of churches and church members mere empty notions.—But the offence is still much greater in any person or sect, to refuse admission to those whom the Lord would have received; and that because it is a virtual blotting their names out of the last will and testament of our Lord Jesus Christ. Should we not think it a villainous act in any, to take out the name of a person, that had his name put into the last will

* Matt. xiii. 41. chap. xxv. 32, 33. Some persons seem to lose sight of the difference between the *visible* and *invisible* church, even by that which is one plain evidence of the difference, *viz.* because there are many hypocrites and unbelievers in the visible church; and so because many baptized children will perish, they would not have them baptized. But this is to be wise, not only *above* what is written, but *against* what is written.

will and testament of a testator; and some valuable legacy left him? Yes: we all say it is sacred; the person must have the benefit, and the last will and testament of the testator must remain unalterable: the testament is in force by the death of the testator, and cannot be altered, with reference to the last will of men that are dead. In like manner, Paul argues the sacredness of the privileges of the covenant of grace, which he calls a testament *; and teaches us that the privileges granted to Abraham and his seed remain firm and unalterable to all the covenant-people of God; and that it is inconsistent with the wisdom, holiness, and faithfulness of God to set aside this act of grace to his people. — Will any plead that children are not capable to stipulate for themselves; and therefore they must be shut out from the covenant and its privileges? To such the answer is ready: when the Lord takes a person into the spiritual and internal part of the covenant of grace, he requires his consent: but this covenant, as to its external privileges and administration, is a merciful gift or grant, which children of visible believers have a title to, and are as capable of entering into covenant, in this regard, as ever. If they were capable of circumcision, which was the seal of the covenant under the ancient dispensation; they are capable of baptism, which is the seal of the covenant under the present dispensation. And if God was greatly offended with any that neglected the seal of the covenant among the Jews †; is it not much more offensive for Christians, under the clear light of the gospel, to deny that the children of believing parents have any part in the covenant itself? If those
that

* Gal. iii. 15. † Exod. iv. 24.

that were not baptized, in our Saviour's time, are, for that reason, represented as despisers of his grace * ; what are they guilty of that deny the foundation of baptism, the covenant of grace, as it belongs to the children of believers ?

III. " By the practice of re-baptizing those that have been baptized in their infancy, the name and ordinance of God are dishonoured, and the reformed churches are set at naught."

I say, the name and ordinance of God are dishonoured by such a practice. If men should express a religious veneration for God's name and ordinances, then a needless, is a sinful use of them; but to use the name of the blessed Trinity, and repeating baptism respecting the same subject, is a needless use, and therefore a sinful abuse of them. It is a practice without any divine warrant: it cannot serve any good intention: it is not an act of duty or obedience to God, but must be offensive in his sight. Would it not therefore be very suitable for people who seem to make light of such a practice, to consider who hath required this at mens hands? And whether God will have his work done by our rules? Or will accept that at our hands, which he hath not appointed?

Again, the reformed churches are set at naught by this practice. No man can prove from scripture, that dipping the body all over in water is necessary to the essence of baptism; nor can they prove it from apostolick practice; and yet the Anabaptists make it essential, tho' without warrant,
and

* Luke vii. 30.

and teach their hearers, that "they have ground, " in their hearts, to judge souls to be godly," who do not go into their measures; but as they are not baptized, (because not plunged all over in water) and "as baptism is an introduction into " the visible church, and essential to it," they very gravely excommunicate all the reformed churches in the world, unless they will profane the ordinance of God, by being re-baptized or plunged into the water. And tho' some, to serve their own ends, may call us Christian churches; when those ends are attained, they teach their people that we and our congregations; we in the ministry and all our churches; are no visible members nor churches of Christ, but a number of unbaptized souls; and therefore unfit for their having communion at the Lord's table on any occasion whatever. All this is on account of a mode of administration, setting themselves up as infallible judges, and making a mere uninstituted mode so essential, I say, as to excommunicate all the reformed churches, together with their kings, and all in authority under them. But, methinks, they might have modesty enough to stop their course a little, and ask themselves, whether it is not possible that some others may understand Greek and Latin, and ancient customs, as well as they? If they could believe this, why should they condemn and reject the most renowned churches in the world as perverters of the holy institution of Christ; because they do not practise in the very same mode that they do? Doth the kingdom of God, in the last times, consist in a mere mode of administration, distinguished from all other modes? If it doth, there is a new thing under the sun; a gospel that Paul and the other apostles

apostles abhorred in their day. And I apprehend, those re-baptizers must needs take those things for evident and important truth, respecting a mere mode of baptism, and a mode essential to the being of the sacred ordinance, which neither they nor their fathers have been able to prove; yet they are wise and good enough, to judge, condemn, and excommunicate the whole reformed church upon that account.—What sect in the whole reformed world, can we more properly apply the words of inspired Paul to, than to those that practised after this sort? “Why is my liberty judged
 “of another man’s conscience?” Why do they walk uncharitably? If they cannot baptize children, why do they excommunicate those that are baptized, because they are not plunged under water? Why is there this notorious, criminal judging, censuring, and clashing among those that call themselves Christians? At what an unreasonable, imprudent rate do they use their Christian liberty? How will they give us good reason to believe that the learned part of them have acted in these things with Christian simplicity? God grant, that they and we may consider Christ as our judge, and that before him both parties shall stand as persons to be tried, and to give an account, expecting our final doom from him, which will be eternally conclusive. But, in the mean time, I must declare, that, as I understand the scriptures, they are guilty of worse than the Corinthian schism. For, the Corinthians, tho’ they, in the celebration of the holy ordinance, fell into parties, continued to be one church; notwithstanding their strifes and divisions, there was no separation from external communion: but the Anabaptists not only have separate assemblies,

but

but hold separate communion from the whole Protestant church, and deny occasional communion with their Christian brethren that differ from them in the mode of baptism, even tho' they profess agreement with them in all doctrinal articles in general. How they, or any for them, can justify or excuse such a schism as this, is quite beyond my comprehension. Paul reckons all schism among the works of the flesh*: and it ought to be really offensive to all good men; for it gives great advantages to the enemies of the truth, and tends to render true religion contemptible and vile before the world.

Use II. Learn hence, “ that it is a plain duty
“ to beware of those zealots who set themselves up
“ against our Christian practice of infant baptism,
“ to draw away disciples after them.” Some in
the apostles days, and afterwards, did pervert and
strain several scriptures to make them patronise their
errors; those that had been much esteemed rose
up, and by their plausible insinuation, made divi-
sions among the disciples of Christ, and brought
them over to themselves as heads of parties †.
How far this is the case in our day, and in these
parts of the land, men will judge for themselves.
But I believe those that have the interests of the
true church at heart; those that love the Redeem-
er's cause, are in pain, and tremble for the ark.
Arminianism has long harboured itself under the
roof, and claimed a kind reception among the re-
formed churches, tho' its doctrines are contrary to
all Protestant confessions of faith. And of late,
Enthusiasm and Anabaptism have joined hands,
and threaten to sweep away our glory. This was
the

* Gal. v. 20, 21.

† Acts xx. 29, 30.

the case very soon after the reformation from Popery began: and like those that promoted it then, so now, as a learned and pious divine has observed, “the Anabaptists are almost every where in a fever, or paroxysm of zeal, to make profelytes to their schismatical, narrow party;” quite opposite to the genius of the gospel of Christ.—Let none of us “say, a confederacy to them to whom others say a confederacy*.” Be not associated with them in their confederacies against the covenant of our God and the holy practice of the church of Jesus Christ. We hold nothing in this ordinance contrary to the institution itself: nothing as to the subject, but what we have supported by the word of God; nothing but what has been perpetually observed in the Christian church, and constantly practised in the apostles time; nothing but what the church has been peaceably possessed of in general, until the Anabaptists in Germany rose up, and wrought woful tragedies in many places; overthrew magistracy, set up a king of their own, and committed many other abominable deeds.—I do not mention these last abominations, to insinuate as if the Anabaptists in these parts have gone into the same practices. But they have already set up the notorious schismatical practice of excommunicating all reformed churches that do not run their dangerous lengths: and what further may not be feared, when Enthusiasm, instead of real Christianity, leads and governs any part, whatever? They who rend and tear the church of Christ to pieces, merely on account of the mode of baptizing; instead of having the covenant of grace confirmed to them thereby, may justly fear
being

* Isa. viii. 12.

being cut off from Christ and his gospel benefits, whatever their pretences be. Would to God, those that are seized with this party fever, might be duly sensible of the aims and ends that govern them. An unlawful action cannot justify a good end; if it would, men might lay the reins upon the neck of their corruptions without controul, and think themselves warranted in schism and other mischief, under the grave pretence of seeking the glory of God; devoutly doing evil that good might come: such vile things have been, and still may be practised, with abundance of seeming love to Christ; and a pretended heart-breaking concern for precious souls, and with a tide of zeal, like a land-flood; when all the show springs from self-love, and zeal to carry on bye-ends, or to uphold or promote a schism in the body of Christ.

But, leaving them with him, whose prerogative it is to look into the secret thoughts of the hearts of all men, and to search out all their principles, motives and ends, that lurk in their inmost parts; I say, leaving them with God, I apprehend it to be your duty and mine, so to behave, as to be no ways aiding and abetting their principles or practices; no ways conniving at, or encouraging them in their designs. Tho' we must be far from cursing or wishing evil to their persons, yet we ought to abhor their schismatical practices, and not love the sin for the sake of the man. God knows whether this has not been a snare in which some have been caught, round about you, as they suppose there has been almost a famine of the pure word of life among them. But no difficulty whatever can justify or excuse us in putting countenance upon a plain

scripture schism : but, as a testimony of our own abhorrence, and of our own innocence, we ought to say, as Jacob did in another case, “ unto their “ assembly, mine honour, be not thou united.”

This, my brethren, I do urge upon you with an honest plain heartedness; and, in these discourses, I trust that I speak conscientiously, as in the sight and presence of the omniscient God. And, if you should practically despise this counsel, you may see reason in the bitterness of your souls, to repent it when it is too late. You that are parents in particular, may, by the countenance you put upon this schism, see and feel reasons of discouragement with regard to your children. A practical treating scripture schism, as tho’ it were a trifle, may draw others to treat it as such; and, as one error leads to another, you may, in a short time, think that your children stand upon a par with heathens; no covenant to plead in their behalf; but they are left as the poor savages in the wilderness to the uncovenanted mercy of God, which must needs damp their spirits under soul concern, in pleading for the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. They could not plead their covenant relation to God as their father, nor his interest in them as his covenant children. They could not plead their covenant privileges and obligations, nor use any other plea but what an heathen might use. I know indeed some Antinomians will call it legal, if any should say that the children of the covenant stand fairer for heaven than the heathen world. But I will venture to say, that the covenant people of God are warranted to plead their covenant interest when they are in distress.

“ Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou

“ art

“ art the Lord my God *.” Ephraim is represented as under conviction of sin, but not converted; and yet, in his prayer for converting grace, he pleads his visible relation to God, as an argument for this mercy.—Add to this, if you think lightly of re-baptizing, and consequently treat it as a small matter, you will easily come to think lightly of profaning the name and ordinance of God, and will naturally instill the same thoughts into your family, and really encourage others therein.

Use III. Let us shut up all with “ a word of “ exhortation”, to *parents*; to *children*; and to the *church* of Christ.

I. “ Let parents take hold of the covenant, not “ only for themselves, but for their children also.” I apprehend there is great encouragement for believing parents to make this attempt; for they are not only the blessed of the Lord themselves, but their offspring with them †. There is a blessing entailed from them to their offspring; “ the seed “ of the blessed of the Lord.” God has been pleased to enter into covenant with you; and not with you only, but with your seed after you. With joyful and thankful entertainment of this covenant you ought to fall before God, as Abraham did ‡: Or with Moses under a sense of special obligations for covenant blessing, “ behold, the heaven, and the “ heaven of heavens, is the Lord’s; the earth also “ with all that therein is. Only the Lord had a “ delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose “ their seed after them, even you above all people, “ as it is this day*.” And is the same God your
covenant

* Jer. xxxi. 18. † Isai. lxx. 23. ‡ Gen. xvii. 17. ** Deut. x. 14, 15.

covenant God, and the God of your seed? Has he put this honour upon them as well as upon you? Has he brought them into his kingdom? Then

“ Exercise faith in a covenant God on their behalf, in every case, and in every branch of your duty respecting them.” The people of God have exercised faith upon the covenant, in behalf of their children. David founds his plea for family blessings upon the covenant of promise, “ on which God caused him to hope.” He desired no more, and expected no less. “ Let the house of thy servant be established before thee: for thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house *.” So all believing parents should look over the promises that God has made respecting the children of such, and pray, as David did, for their own children, as being part of the covenant which the Lord has made with them: “ Let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant with thy blessing, let the house of thy servant be truly and eternally blessed.” And if you exercise faith in the promises for your children, you may entail very great blessings upon them, and live to see many good things of the covenant accomplished unto them, which will be matter of unspeakable comfort to you, if you should leave them in an evil world, or if they die before you. How happy would it be, if you could on good grounds view your children, those olive plants round about your tables, likely to share in the special grace of the covenant! They are branches of the good olive tree; and to see them bid fair for trees of righteousness in the church of God

* 2 Sam. vii. 26, 27. 1 Chr. xvii. 24, 25.

God upon earth, would be comfortable indeed. Consider how the church is to be kept up, in a succession, by the seed of the faithful; “instead of “the fathers shall be the children;” as one generation passeth away, another generation shall come, “from hence forth and forever?”

II. “Let children walk worthy of their covenant privileges and engagements.” Has God entailed his covenant upon you in all its visible privileges and blessings? Then take heed that you do not live in the careless violation of its solemn engagements. Despise not the grace of God that you have received, but actually take hold of the covenant in your own persons. Grace has hitherto prevented you; has gone before, upheld, and hindered your ruin. God has taken you into a familiar covenant with himself, of his own mere mercy and distinguishing grace. You might have been among the uncircumcised, without a covenant God in the world. But it is otherways, and you enjoy a very great privilege in being born of covenant parents, and in having the seal of the covenant put upon you. Consequently, it will be a great aggravation of your sin, guilt and judgment, if you, like profane Esau, despise your birth-right. The contempt of such a privilege is a great sin and dishonour to God, and will add great weight to your guilt, and enhance the reckoning another day. You are children of the visible kingdom of grace; but if you despise the covenant of your God, you must be cut off: if you make light of it, or rest in your external privileges, you must be cast into outer darkness, while “many shall come from the “east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham,

“braham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom
 “of heaven.” O that these children might be
 wise in time! O that they may take heed to them-
 selves in the day of gracious visitation, lest they,
 who are an holy stock, should be cast out as abo-
 minable branches! My young friends, if God
 should open your eyes, and convince you of sin
 and misery; if he should make you duly sensible
 that you have destroyed yourselves, and that your
 righteousnesses are as filthy rags, then plead the
 covenant of your God. “Remember the cove-
 “nant thou hast made unto Abraham, and the
 “land thou gavest unto Abraham thy friend for
 “ever.”

III. Permit me to address the church. “And
 “O that all the churches would exercise a special
 “watch over, and tender compassion to the chil-
 “dren of the covenant.” I humbly apprehend,
 there has been a very great declension in these
 churches, particularly respecting their duty to-
 wards baptized children, for many years past.
 And it may be worthy of their serious considera-
 tion, whether it is not partly owing to their ne-
 glect, that so many are guilty of despising the oath,
 and breaking the covenant? Does it not become
 every particular church to take care that the bap-
 tized are brought up as children of God, in the
 nurture and admonition of the Lord? Surely such
 children are members of the visible church; and
 are not they committed to the care of the church?
 Does not the church virtually promise to watch o-
 ver every child that is baptized in it? If so, it is
 the glory of the church to bring forth children,
 and offer them up unto God; to see that all things,
 in

in the way of means, are attended, that they might be the Lord's.

The general neglect of that important duty, which parents and churches owe to their children, is a sorrowful obstruction to the success of the ministry. Hence it comes to pass, that we are called to build without a foundation; and our hearers receive the grace of God in vain. Probably faithful ministers might do ten times more good than they do, were parents and churches duly attentive to teach and govern the children of the covenant. O that we might see a speedy and thorough reformation of family instruction, and church inspection, and the well ordering of both! And let them be excited to lay up a stock of prayers for our children and the rising generation. We should consider their covenant relation to God, and their extreme need of the efficacious grace of the covenant; and let these be powerful motives in our hearts, to lay the hand of faith upon them, and pray that, as they rise up and take our places, they might declare the name of the Lord to succeeding generations.

APPEN-



A P P E N D I X.

SEVERAL months past was published for *Philip Freeman of Boston*, a Pamphlet entitled, “The Doctrine of Believers Baptism, by *Immersion only*; asserted and maintained, against the attempts of *Mr. Jonathan Parsons, A. M.* to invalidate it, &c.” By *H. Smith, A. M.* late of *Nassau-Hall, &c.*

This Pamphlet may be considered as *extraordinary* on many accounts: I shall mention some, as follow, *viz.* 1. It is very *confident* and *assuming*; and thereby it gives a clear view of the sufficiency, temper, and religion of its author; and also of the despicable arts he has used to support and propagate his favourite principles. 2. It has met with a *transporting* reception among some of those whom I designed to point out in my sermons. In such an *extasy* were *some*, that they reported that *Mr. Parsons* was dead; and *others*, that he was cut to pieces. 3. It is also remarkable, that so *learned* a person as *Mr. S.* should condescend to take such unwearied pains to convict an inconsistent, weak, unrighteous *Smatterer*, as he represents me to be. — One would have thought that a person so *unguarded* in his writings, as plainly to subvert the

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design

design of his settlement, and to introduce justification by the deeds of the law, might have been detected, by those that had lived under his ministry above twenty years, without the help of his learned pen. But, doubtless, Mr. S. considered the Presbyterians at *Newbury-Port*, as a company of very weak and ignorant people; and therefore that they stood in need of some *able* instructor to teach them, and consequently dare not refuse his aid.—If it were not so, why should he, with so much ardour and pity, like a person in distress, call upon them, once and again, to view me as a poor, *inconsistent*, self-contradictory writer?—one that shifts from side to side?—*presumptuous and ignorant*?—*strangely confounding the covenant of grace and covenant of works*?—whose *inconsistency is very evident*?—who twists, turns, and *changes the order* of Christ's commission?—vindicating *his tenets only by unrighteous methods*?—publicly *patronizes Arminianism, false doctrine, bad divinity—contrary to orthodoxy, &c. &c. &c.*? I say, one would have thought that a person of Mr. S's penetration might have seen it needless to take so much pains, and to do me this great honour, and abundance more of the like nature.—

But since he thought it worth while to tug hard, and twist into almost any Shape to misrepresent me, and to gain his point in view; and has also sent me one of his learned pamphlets, containing fifty six pages, besides the preface, he may possibly think more highly of himself, than he ought, if there is no publick notice taken of it. But I hope the reader will not despise the good cause I have humbly attempted to defend, on account of
the

the great abilities of my antagonist. Let him not have the faith of our Lord *Jesus Christ* with respect of persons; for, if that should be the case, he would not judge of the controversy according to the *evidence* brought in favour of the truth, but according to the esteem he has of the *person* offering it. Truth has often run great hazards, because the person that vindicates it is not esteemed by the person that reads it. But if you will make truth your greatest advantage, I need not fear the evils of your censure. In hopes of a candid attention in the reader, I shall now begin; and

I. Take a glance upon Mr. S's preface. He says "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." *Agreed*: but perhaps we shall differ, if I tell him, that the good name spoken of by *Solomon*, is a name for *good things*; a name that has its foundation laid in an innocent, unblamable life and conversation; a name that renders a person truly worthy of honour. And whether Mr. S. deserves a good name, in this sense, those that know him personally, and his readers, will judge for themselves.—He complains of "a heavy and unjust charge" alledged by me against him in my discourses at *Haverhill*, on the subject of infant-baptism. But I know of nothing in those discourses that he needs to groan under, but the weight of the arguments I adduced to support the main truths exhibited.—But Mr. S. meant a marginal note concerning a zealous anabaptist teacher, which, as it is offensive, I drop in the second edition: but, instead of it, I think myself bound to give my readers a few scraps of *historical* truths, which possibly may be as disagreeable as the note itself.

In conversation, more than two years ago, a professed *baptist* very frankly told me, that “ he looked upon a particular mode of baptism, as distinguished from other modes, not at all essential to the *being* of that ordinance; and that he could freely join with us in the sacrament of the Lord’s supper.” About the same time, the same *candid* person told another minister, and several others, that he could freely baptize the infants of believers, either by sprinkling or *affusion*, if the parents desired it.—He also told me, that the design of his taking a long journey into these parts, was to preach Christ among poor people that could not procure preachers.—That he desired, to this end, to travail down to the eastern settlements, and preach among them, from place to place, until the *then* fall of the year, when he should return back to the *Jerseys*.—I told him, if these things were so, I was willing, upon certain conditions, to write in his favour.—He expressed his thankfulness; and mentioned his desire of my writing several times.—Accordingly I wrote to one minister and one ruling elder. I told them, in my letters, who the bearer was, and what his professed design was. I read him both of the letters, and he expressed his approbation of my cautious manner of writing as to his sentiments about baptism; and took the letters with a low bow.—I then took him alone, and told him that I was pleased to see young men, as well as others, zealous in religion: but that zeal without light was a very dangerous thing.—That I had observed he was very zealous; but he must not take it ill of me, if I also told him that he appeared raw in divinity, and that such preaching as I had heard from

from him did not tend to serve his professed design. Therefore I urged him to study more, and preach less; and told him, if he would be faithful to his pretensions, and closely apply himself to study, I was willing he should keep the letters, and go forward.—Upon this he expressed his resolutions to take my advice: and told me he expected to set out towards the eastern settlements the next *Friday*, &c. &c.

In this account, I am fully satisfied that there is not one idea *communicated*, but what was *conveyed* in conversation, besides many more which I omit for the sake of brevity. But if the case should hereafter call for it, I expect many other things will be produced, and, if need be, sworn to, which may give further light respecting a certain person, who seems to set a great price upon a good name.—Whether this view of the case suits better than the marginal note, Mr. S. and his friends may judge. Since they have made a great noise about it, and he has insinuated in his preface, that I did not believe myself, I think duty has called me to publish these hints: and if he can construe *Latin*, he may think of what follows, *viz.*

Qui mittit in altum lapidem, recidet in caput ejus.

When I had carefully read over Mr. S's wonderful piece against my vindication of the doctrine of *infant-baptism*, it put me in mind of a saying of one of the Fathers; *corrodunt non corrigunt; correctores, immo corruptores*. And also, of *Saul's* piety, who says, "I forced myself, and offered a
burnt-

burnt-offering," *i. e.* he did it without a divine warrant ; and it proved to his own hurt. And these two things I leave, for the present, to Mr. S's more sober reflection.—But the reader must allow me to observe, that the many noisy explosions of his heart, (sometimes pitying my ignorance ; at other times accusing me of using unrighteous methods to accomplish my design ; then attacking my sentiments in divinity, and anon, charging me with inconsistency ; pitying my poor deluded people, and warning them to take heed, &c. &c.) I say, the many things of this nature, often repeated *without* evidence, are *evident* marks of great distress, and loud calls to his dear brethren for their help.—Yet, if he should be more noisy still, and represent me in darker colours, (if that can be) I pray God to grant him the special knowledge of the saving truth ; and hope, through grace, I shall always be able to say, *meam injuriam patienter tuli ; injuriam contra spousam Christi ferre non potui.*—I shall endeavour to bury his mean insults upon me in forgetfulness ; but his injuries done to the important truths of God, and the cause of the *great Redeemer*, are *insufferable*. And, in vindication of my arguments for the truth, against his wild exceptions, the reader ought not to be offended if I am led to expose him.

He spends the 8th page of his pamphlet, chiefly in endeavouring to persuade his readers that I am inconsistent with myself. But for his help to a good understanding of *English*, and for the benefit of others, who may be at a loss about the meaning of words, I must inform them, that by initiating, and by the seal or mark of induction in-

to the church, &c. I mean the same that every honest person means, if he understands *English*, viz. Performing *the first rite* unto qualified subjects ; or putting the mark, token, or seal upon them, and thereby making their *right manifest*.— This, applied to baptism, is marking out and manifesting the persons baptized, to be what they really are, viz. Members of the visible church. By that instituted rite they are solemnly admitted, because, in a qualified sense, they were members before ; as a child born in an army is *enrolled* because he is the king's soldier, &c.—— This hint, I hope, will help Mr. S's understanding : and if it should, possibly he may understand what follows, viz. If *known* qualifications *make* persons members of the visible church ; then baptism does not *make* them members of the visible church : but known qualifications make them members of the visible church ; therefore baptism does not *make* them so. 'Tis granted ; baptism is a solemn rite of admission ; or an *enrolment* of the party baptized ; but he has this mark or seal put upon him, because, in a qualified sense, he was a member before : otherwise, it would be absurd to admit or enroll him, or to initiate him by the seal of the covenant.

I Shall now enter upon the consideration of the main things intended by Mr. S. against my arguments in favour of infant-baptism. And

I. Against the first argument he offers several things, which, if he had proved, it might serve his purpose. P. 6. he very confidently asserts that no persons have a right to the sign of membership without (before) they make a profession of faith and

and repentance. To prove this he adduces *Acts* ii. 38. and viii. 37. But if Mr. S. would prove any thing from the Scriptures, I suppose it is, that those *Jews* to whom *Peter* preached, and the *Eunuch* who sought to be baptized by *Philip*, were required to profess faith and repentance. And what is that to the purpose? Will he argue that the *adult* must profess faith and repentance, in order to baptism? And who does he oppose in it, unless it be a man of straw of his own making? But will it follow that, because the *adult* are to profess faith and repentance in order to baptism, therefore their children have no right to baptism? If Mr. S. would do any thing against my argument he must show that the covenant of promise to men in a church-state, does not comprize their children: or that *none* but those who are capable of professing faith are taken into covenant with God. Whereas, had he honestly considered the 39th verse of that 2^d chapter, the mask would have dropt and discovered his weakness. Repent and be baptized, &c. *For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* In these words of the Apostle, the reader may see an encouragement to baptism, taken from a covenant-privilege, which is set forth as it was extended to the *Jews*, and to their children; and then to the *Gentiles*, when they should be called into the same church-state that the *Jews* were in at that time. The *call* here spoken of can't mean an effectual call, such as is proper to them that are sanctified by the holy Spirit: for if it were so, the *visible* token of membership, would be limited to the *invisible* church. But it is a call unto a church-state, such as the *Jews* did enjoy at that

that time. Hence, the reader may see the force of *Peter's* argument is this, *viz.* "Those have a right to baptism, unto whom the covenant of promise belongs: but this covenant belongs to all in the visible church, and to their children." None can deny the first proposition, unless they oppose the Apostle himself. And as to the 2^d proposition, that the covenant comprises children with parents, the Apostle plainly shows: for when he assigns the first place to the *Jews*, and takes in their children, he refers to the promise of God's covenant in *Gen. xvii. 7.* And as the blessing of the *Abrahamick* covenant run to the *Jews* and their seed, until they were broken off, so it was to come upon the *Gentiles*, who were then *far from God*, and from his covenant; but to be brought in, *even they and their children.*

What Mr. S. would represent of me, (Page 6. and 7.) gives me no pain. It is common with weak people, for want of argument, to make use of many *bugbear* words, thereby to alarm their weak admirers. I am willing to hope that it was his profound ignorance of the extent of the covenant of grace, that led him to represent me as an *Arminian*, holding *dangerous doctrine*; giving up *the important doctrine of regeneration*; teaching *justification by the deeds of the law*; subverting *the very foundation of my settlement at NEWBURY*; and maintaining *total apostasy* from the grace of effectual calling, with many other sentences of false terror. I say, that I am willing to hope on the most charitable side; had it not been manifest that he expected to make great advantages to himself by this false alarm.—The reader may presently see that all these representations are *abusive* flanders,

ders, and *groundless* charges ; tending neither to help his cause, nor uphold that good name, which he professed to value above great riches, in his first setting out.

In the next place, upon my first argument, he boggles, and starts at my asserting that the *Abrahamick* covenant is the covenant of grace. Now, although I offered light enough to prove this truth, under the 2^d head of my first argument, to satisfy a serious reader ; yet, as further evidence, you may take what follows, *viz.* 1. That covenant wherein God makes over himself to a person, is the covenant of grace ; but God made over himself unto *Abraham* and to his seed, in that covenant which he established between himself and *Abraham*, *Gen.* xvii. 7. therefore that covenant is the covenant of grace. The major, or first proposition must be true ; because, since the fall of *Adam*, God is not the God of any out of Christ. The minor, or 2^d proposition is expressly asserted in the text referred to : and therefore the consequence is unavoidable.— 2. That covenant which represents God as shewing mercy to sinners, is the covenant of grace : but the *Abrahamick* covenant represents God in this view, *Exod.* xxxiv. 6. therefore it is the covenant of grace. There is no mediator, no peace with God, no pardon of sin held forth in the covenant of works : But these blessings are held forth in the covenant made with *Abraham* and his seed.— 3. That covenant to which the typical sacrifices did belong is the covenant of grace : but the typical sacrifices did belong to the *Abrahamick* covenant : therefore it is the covenant of grace.— All the sacrifices under the law, had some

some respect to the great sacrifice of Christ, and its blessed effects. They were to shew men that without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. And God ratified this covenant by blood, which he sprinkled upon the book of *the law*, as it lay upon the altar, to consecrate it to sacred use, as containing the covenant, in which God was one party ; and sprinkled it also upon the people, as the other party in that covenant, typically representing that the covenant between God and believers should be confirmed by the blood of Christ, *Exod. xxiv. 5, 6, 7. Heb. ix. 19.* Hence, the law in its administration was never intended by God to set forth a covenant of works, but the covenant of grace. And it is usually called a covenant, see *Deut. xxix. 10, 11. Chap. xxvi. 17, 18.* besides other scriptures.— 4. That covenant which binds to the observation of the ceremonial law, is a covenant of grace : but the *Abrahamic* covenant bound the people of God, under the former dispensation, to observe the ceremonial law : therefore it was the covenant of grace. — 5. That covenant which God made with *Moses*, was the covenant of grace ; for *Moses* was a believer, *Heb. xi. 23.* But the covenant which God made with *Moses*, he made with all *Israel*, *Exod. xxxiv. 27, 28.* therefore it was the covenant of grace.

Having offered these arguments very briefly, in addition to the evidences in my Sermon, I shall endeavour to collect Mr. S's objections in the fairest light I am able, out of so much darkness as covers them. And here

I. If he is intelligible, I think he objects (P. 10.
and

and 11. and many other places) that if the covenant of grace was made with *Abraham* and his seed, then some that were effectually called, might afterwards fall away, and finally perish. This he supposes Mr. P. would not choose to assert; but yet supposes it must be the consequence of my opinion respecting the *Abrahamick* covenant. And to show that all the children of believing parents can't be included in their parents covenant, (without final falling from grace) he several times over mentions *Ismael*, *Hophni*, *Phineas*, and others, as persons that were not included in the covenant with their parents; or if they were, then that the final perseverance of the saints is not true. This again he intimates, that I should not readily and openly profess whatever my private opinion might be, since I have openly professed, and zealously maintained the final perseverance of the saints, or of all those that are effectually called.

Now, whatever my present sentiments are, respecting the total apostasy of some that have been savingly converted, Mr. S. knows, at least he ought to have known before he commenced an author, that other divines, of much greater importance to the church than either of us, have held the final perseverance of the saints; and yet have constantly asserted that the children of believers are included in the covenant of grace with their parents.—Therefore, if, upon this head, he would have said any thing *really* to answer his design, he should have proved, if that were possible, that *none* but those, who are effectually called, are included in the covenant of grace. But this he has not once attempted to do; nor will he be able to do it, by
the

~~his~~ ^{his} utmost efforts, without recourse to a *new* Bible.

Tho' he has done nothing, by way of argument, to support this his *antisciptural* cavil; I shall, for the sake of those readers that sincerely desire to embrace the truth, offer a few things further, *viz.*

I. It is very evident from the Scriptures, that "the covenant of believing parents takes in all their seed." It took in all the natural seed of *Abraham* by *Sarah*, *Rom.* ix. 7, 8. Tho' but few of them, compared with the whole, partook of the internal and everlasting blessings of the covenant of grace, yet all who descended from *Abraham* in the line of *Isaac* and *Jacob* were the children of God, adopted into his family, which comprised the whole body of the *Jews*; and they all enjoyed the temporal and the external blessings of the covenant, *Job.* viii. 33, 37, 39. *Ismael* also was in covenant at the time of his circumcision, and his circumcision was a proof of it, *Gen.* xvii. 11. And he continued in covenant, until, by God's special command, he was cast out for mocking his brother, *Gen.* xxi. 9, 10, 12. In like manner God will *exclude* those from his covenant, who seek to be justified by the law, and despise the righteousness of Jesus Christ, *Gal.* iv. 29, 30. There are two sorts of people in the visible church: one sort walketh in the steps of faithful *Abraham*, and the other sort walketh after the flesh: and this will *probably* be the case to the end of time. And all in the visible church are called sons of God, children of the covenant, because they are distinguished with great and precious external privileges, as the favourites

vourites of heaven, *Rom.* ix. 4. They enjoy the visible tokens of the divine presence, in opposition to those that are not in the visible church. So all the *Israelites* were *Jews* outwardly, *Deut.* xiv. 1. *Mat.* viii. 12. *Acts* iii. 25. And this was not only true of the *Jews*, but it is now the privilege of the *Gentiles*, who were strangers to the covenant of grace in its various editions, until they were called into a visible church-state, *Eph.* ii. 12, 19. *Gal.* iii. 26. I presume no person (except it be an *Antinomian*) will venture to say that all those who were called into a church-state at *Ephesus*, were *effectually* called by the holy Spirit. Especially, it cannot be supposed, with any colour of reason, that the *Galatian* converts, who forsook *Paul*, and followed the judaizing teachers, and embraced their pernicious errors, were savingly converted to God. Their surprising conduct against that eminent apostle was from evident hatred to the truth; particularly, to those great doctrines which he asserted and maintained against those that preached another gospel. Nevertheless, they were members of the visible church, and the covenant people of God. And, as those hypocrites were in covenant for outward privileges, so the covenant included their seed with them, as to such privileges, as fully as if they had been *effectually* called.

II. *Visible church members have been cast out of their covenant relation to God; they and their children.* None but those that were in covenant could be cast out, *1 Cor.* v. 12, 13. The jurisdiction of church-rulers doth not extend to the heathen, but to the covenant people of God. Those that are left out of covenant are left to the judgment of

God

God in the administrations of his providence : but those that are the covenant people of God are cast out, when they appear to be irrecoverable. So *Cain* was cast out of the church, *Gen.* iv. 11, 14. And this is an immoveable evidence that he was in covenant with God, until, for his bloody crime against his brother *Abel*, he was cast out. The rejection, both of *Cain* and *Ishmael*, necessarily infer their being members of the visible church. They were both in covenant with God ; but when he cast them out, they were not to be looked upon in covenant any longer ; nor could they lay claim to any covenant-privileges. The same is true of the whole nation of the *Jews* ; they and their seed. Once they were a chosen nation, a peculiar people, separated to God as his covenant people ; *Jews* by nature, and not sinners of the *Gentiles*. To them did belong all the precious external privileges of the church of the living God, *Rom.* ix. 4. *Deut.* xxix. 12, 14, 15.—and yet very few of them were finally saved. And those that rejected Christ, and continued to do so, after he came in the flesh and was crucified, were cast out of the church, and God has publickly disowned them and their children for his people, unto this day !—The same awful threatening lies against the *Gentile* church ; and it may be justly expected that the threatening will be executed, when and where, and so far as their state and conduct call for it, *Rev.* ii. 5.

But says Mr. S. by Mr. M's help, if the case is as I have represented it, then, 1. Some that are justified and sanctified may be finally lost. And 2. that believers before *Abraham's* day could not go to heaven. They could neither be justified nor condemned ;

demned: they could go neither to heaven nor hell, &c. *vid.* P. 11—14. And the reason he gives is because they are out of *Abraham's* covenant.

To the first of these I answer; the covenant of grace hath *two parts*, answerable to the promises contained in it. The promises of justification, sanctification, and everlasting blessedness are inexpressibly the most excellent. But there are spiritual privileges and worldly good things also, comprised in the covenant of grace, *1 Tim.* 4. 8. People may be, and have been in the covenant of grace for spiritual privileges, who never were, or will be justified, sanctified and glorified, *Rom.* iii. 1, 2. *Hof.* viii. 12. *Rom.* ix. 4. All the seed of believers are taken into the outward privileges of the covenant; and they may and ought to claim them as their right, against all that any man can offer to oppose it, unless, by their own sin, they deserve to be cut off.

But supposing, (what is not true) that none but believers are included in the covenant of grace; even then it would appear, that those who are not *effectually* called are in the covenant of grace: for God gives the character of *believers, saints, disciples, chosen people, holy nation, &c.* to those that are not effectually called. See *Deut.* vii. 6. *Ch.* xxvi. 19. *Acts* ix. 32, 41. *Ch.* viii. 12, 13, 21. *Ch.* iv. 4. *Pf.* lxxviii. 34. *Luk.* viii. 13. *1 Cor.* xiv. 33. From these and other scriptures, too many to be named, it appears that persons are in the covenant of grace for spiritual privileges, who are not savingly converted.—And indeed, to restrain the covenant to that *antinomian* sense that Mr. S. plainly

plainly restrains it, will involve him in those absurdities, which neither he nor his brethren will easily get rid of.—What will they do with those covenant breakers, *Psal.* lxxviii. 10, 37? And were not those in covenant with God, who are threatened with a curse, *Jer.* xxxiv. 18, 19, 20? Or what will they do with those hypocrites that are in the world? Doth not God often complain of hypocrites in the church, who yet have some sort of faith, and some of them the most confident of being saved? And are not such as these in covenant with God, *Psal.* lxxviii. 8, 10, 36, 37?—Besides all this: if the covenant is extended to none but those that are *effectually* called, what can Mr. S. and his Anabaptist brethren do in their office? Can they certainly know that every person they lead to renounce their infant-baptism, and make a profession of faith and repentance, is effectually called? Jesus Christ indeed, might have said this with certainty, because *he knew what was in man*, and could distinguish between *real* and *visible* Christians. But, tho' we may have a judgment of discretion respecting the *state* of others, yet who, except some extravagant enthusiast, will pretend to the infallible knowledge of the brethren?—And if we can go no further than a judgment of discretion, how can a saving change be the ground upon which the privilege of baptism is granted? Or if a saving change is the ground, how then can fallible men ever baptize at all? Will they say, we must act upon the visibility of their being in covenant with God? I join issue with them, and have proved already, that the seed of visible believers are as visibly in covenant with God as their parents.

Hence it follows, that a person may be under the law, as a covenant of works, and yet have a good right to the external privileges of the covenant of grace. It was observed, in my first Sermon, that as to the *state* of persons, all are either renewed or unrenewed, and, in that sense, they cannot be under both covenants at once ; that if they are effectually called they are not under the law, as a covenant of works ; but if they are not effectually called, they are still under the law. But the *antinomian* consequence is no true consequence, *viz.* That an unconverted person is, in no respects, in the covenant of grace : for an unconverted person may have as plain, full, and revealed right to the spiritual privileges of the covenant, as one that is effectually called. If he is one of those whom God has separated from the world to himself, he must have as good a visible right to some external privileges as the best man in the world.

Therefore, what becomes of the *impossibility* of being in the covenant of grace, and not falling from the grace of effectual calling ? May not a person have a revealed covenant right to common mercies and outward gospel privileges, and never be justified before God by the perfect righteousness of Christ ; never be renewed and sanctified by the holy Spirit ; and therefore never be glorified in another world ? Even Mr. S. would not choose to say *openly* that all he plunges under water “ will go to heaven ;” and yet they are, in his opinion, the covenant people of God, when he has prevailed upon them *sacrilegiously* to renounce the covenant and turn Anabaptists. And whether those he converts to his party will go to heaven or hell, yet

yet others may be, and have been interested in the covenant of grace, who shall never enter into the kingdom of glory.

But then we meet with repeated difficulties *pretended* about *Adam*, *Abel*, *Enoch* and others, (as many as you please) before *Abraham's* day, that were savingly converted.—And will the reader allow me, on this occasion, to use the words of my learned antagonist? Then I should say, it is *mere noise without substance*. For God brought *Adam*, *Abel*, and *Enoch*, under the covenant of grace, in *both* its parts. The same covenant was made with them, that was made with *Abraham*, tho' it was not sealed by circumcision. Circumcision was bottomed upon the command of God; *i. e.* if there had been no command for it, no man might have signed the covenant with such a seal; but the command had relation to the covenant which was not sealed before. All those, before *Abraham*, that were effectually called, and so were interested in *both* parts of the covenant of grace, are doubtless round about the throne, “saying with a loud voice, worthy “is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and “riches, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” *

After Mr. S. has spent about a page together (besides the general tendency of the most of his pamphlet) to misinform his readers about the covenant of grace, he returns back to the membership

* That I might not render my Appendix extreme lengthy, I do but hint at things. But if God should spare and enable me, I am willing, upon proper encouragement, to publish my thoughts more largely, as I have lately had a call to open them to my own people.

ship of children ; and, with the help of Mr. *Morgan*, injudiciously, tho' very warmly, argues in the following manner, *viz.* " That law which gave being to infant membership and circumcision, is abolished by divine authority, as part of the former administration. This (says he) must be granted, or else circumcision is yet in force." But he has proved *neither* that the law which gave being to infant membership is abolished ; *nor*, that circumcision must be in force, provided the law which gave being to infant membership is not abolished ; unless the important word *methinks*, will prove it. Perhaps he did not expect his readers would see that the law of church membership was one thing, and the initiating seal is another. The subjects are the same that they were under the former dispensation of the covenant, tho' the seal of induction is changed from circumcision to baptism. The abolition of circumcision as a type, did not abolish the initiating seal of the covenant, nor cast the children of believing parents out of the covenant. As they were taken into covenant by a law, that has never been repealed, so they must be signed or marked out for the Lord, as members of his family, or subjects of his kingdom : for, ever since God took a people to himself out of the loins of *Abraham*, he has appointed a seal, and ordered the time of its administration. " A man that hath a grant from king or state, hath *ipso facto* right to the seal ; and the right necessarily follows upon the grant, tho' he must stay till a sealing day before he possess it."

His next attempt, which is from *Heb. viii. 8, 9.* and *Jer. xxxi.* is as little to his purpose.—What if

if the *mosaick* dispensation, with all its rites, ceremonies, and institutions, is now set aside? This will give no evidence at all, that the children of believing parents are cast out of covenant. The Apostle calls it “a *new* covenant, in that he hath “made the first *old*.” But this cannot refer to the covenant of *grace* and the covenant of *works*; or to two *distinct* covenants; for then it would follow, in the *former* case, that there was no covenant of grace revealed to men before the new-testament dispensation; and in the *latter*, that all, in the new-testament times, who enter into covenant, do keep covenant; but all in old-testament times were covenant-breakers. But the contrary to both these things are evidently true. There were some that kept covenant in old-testament times, *Psal.* xlv. 17. and ciii. 17. and there are some covenant-breakers under the present dispensation of the covenant, *1 Tim.* v. 12. The law was written in mens hearts under the former dispensation, *Deut.* xxx. 6. *Isai.* lv. 3. Hence, the *oldness* that is abolished is only in circumstances, wherewith the covenant of grace was then clothed.

—Both the *old* and *new* covenant are *substantially* one and the same covenant: Christ is the mediator of both, though in the former he was typified by *Moses*. Both have one and the same terms on Christ’s part, forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Both are one and the same on man’s part: “the just lived by faith under the *former* dispensation;” and under the *new* dispensation, it is “whosoever believeth in him shall receive the remission of sins.”—Both are one and the same church of Christ, *Matt.* viii. 11. Their faith terminated on one and the same object, *Job.* viii.

56. 1 Cor. x. 3, 4.—And these *identities* manifest that the church is the same under both dispensations. The same kingdom which the *Jews* possessed; the same privileges which they enjoyed as the peculiar people of God, were taken from them and given to the *Gentiles*, *Matt.* xxi. 43.—Now, if the Mediator be the same; the terms on both sides the same; then the covenant is the same; the *old* covenant which the *Jews* entered into, and the *new* covenant which Christians enter into, is one and the same covenant.—'Tis granted; the covenant of grace, under its present dispensation, is called a new covenant: but it cannot be because it is not substantially the same with the former, since the terms of both are the same; but it is because, since it is held forth by Jesus Christ, no nation is debarred from entering into it: there is a change of ordinances, and it is now consecrated by the blood of Christ. It is also new, because the light, liberty, and grace contained therein, are more clearly, comfortably, expressly and abundantly promised in this, than in the former dispensation of it; and because of the more spiritual ordinances of worship that are contained in this, than were in the former dispensation.—

And what of all this? Doth it follow that the covenant is not the same? No. You might as well argue, that *the law of love* was not the same law to God's people of old, as to his people under the gospel, because it is now called *a new commandment*. Whereas, there was the same law, commanding love one to another, under the *Jewish*, as there is under the christian dispensation. This law of love is fully contained in the *Decalogue*, and other parts of the *Old Testament*.—

But

But it is called a *new* commandment, because it is enjoined by a new example, and with new explanations, motives and enforcements. So, the covenant of grace, under the former dispensation, was clothed with darkness and terror, agreeable to that legal state; and was *not found faultless*, or without defect; *i. e.* it was less perfect, than what was to succeed; or, it was imperfect *compared* with the present dispensation: and, in distinction from it, the present is a clear, disincumbered, spiritual, and glorious dispensation; or a glorious edition and enlargement of the same covenant; and therefore it is called new.—Hence, Mr. S. with the assistance of Mr. *Morgan*, has done nothing to his purpose, unless he designed to work himself up into the clouds, and amuse his readers with darkness. For he has done nothing to invalidate the evidence that I have offered, proving that the *Abrahamick* covenant is the covenant of grace.

Nor doth what he offers, P. 16. against the *everlastingness* of it, argue any thing to his purpose. For, altho' the word *everlasting* is not always to be taken strictly; yet when the covenant of grace is the subject in question, it always signifies a *perpetual* continuance. Tho' many circumstances in the administration may be altered, yet the covenant itself is lasting in all its spiritual privileges; and its efficacious promises reach thro' all periods of time: yea, everlasting life is promised in it; and it is of eternal efficacy; for the glory and reward, which the great HEAD of the covenant has purchased for all that are, or shall be effectually called, is *an eternal weight of glory.*

Again;

Again; Mr. S. says I have intimated that the *Abrahamick* covenant is a *pure* covenant of grace. This he said of me, not because I called it a pure covenant, but; I suppose, it was to draw out my sentiments, that so he might, in his next, draw out all the force he can rally from his party against me. And considering he may be straitened for matter to make out another pamphlet, I am willing to affirm what is really an important truth upon this head, though I had no need to do it for the vindication of my arguments against his exceptions. Therefore I do now assert that the *ABRAHAMICK covenant is a pure covenant of grace*. For, if it is not pure, but *mixt* as the Anabaptists (to help themselves against infant baptism) have asserted, then it is a compound of *pure* and *impure*; *i. e.* some of its ingredients are such as they should be, and others are *adulterate*. Like the false teachers doctrine in *Paul's* day, whom he opposed as perverters of the pure gospel of Christ: or like the *Antinomians*, against whom *James* wrote, for their making high pretensions to faith in Christ for justification, without any proof of its sincerity by fruitfulness in good works. Both these sorts of hypocrites held to some revealed truths, but they mixed them with others that were corrupt, and so spoiled the whole.—I hope Mr. S. will not say, in his answer, that the gospel which *Paul* tells us was preached to *Abraham*, was an *Arminian* or an *Antinomian* gospel. This, before, would make the *Abrahamick* covenant impure enough.—Or is it impure, because it had promises referring not only to eternal blessedness, but to temporal good? But are we not under such a gospel in these days also? If there is no promise in the covenant of grace, respecting tempo-

ral good, how will Mr. S. pray, in faith, for his daily bread? Or, what will he say to those promises, *Psal.* xxxvii. 3. and ^{psalm} *iii.* 5. *Matt.* vi. 25—30. besides an hundred other promises respecting the life that now is? Can a believer be in any relation or circumstance of life, and have no gospel promise suited to his case?—Tho' the most eminent promises in the *Abrahamick* covenant respect eternal life, yet there are great and precious promises in that covenant respecting the life that *now is*, both under the former and *present* dispensation of it.

After many violent assaults of his own, with the assistance of several not so noted as himself, he tries the virtue of Dr. Gill's arguments. And the *Anabaptist's* in our land, so far as I have had opportunity to observe, seem to think whatever that learned writer says, must be true; and his *ipse dixit* is full proof of it. By hearing him referred to, and often quoted as if it ought to *put an end to all strife*, minded me of the two following lines, viz.

*Qui ^{singit} ~~frangit~~ sacros, auro, vel marmore vultus
Non facit ille deos; qui rogat, ille facit.*

If Mr. S. quotes Dr. Gill truly, he tells us from *Rom.* xi. 16, 17. "that by the *first fruits*," is meant "the first converts among the *Jews* under the gospel dispensation, &c."—But, if Mr. S. thinks Dr. Gill's name should stand for evidence, I hope Dr. Gill will not expect that every one can shut their eyes against the light, in complaisance to his name.—Let us rather consider the plain and

familiar sense of what the Apostle has wrote in the text referred to.—To take down the pride of the *Gentiles*, and their insults over the *Jews*, the Apostle shows, in the 11th verse, that the whole body of the *Jews*, as a nation, were not cut off from their visible church privileges, *irrecoverably* and *for ever*. But their rejecting Christ should be over-ruled, for spreading the gospel so much the sooner among the *Gentiles*: and the reception which it met with among the *Gentiles*, was ordered to be a means of trial to the *Jews*, for exciting them to go beyond the *Gentiles* in faith and obedience.—And, verse 12. if the falling of the *Jews* from God's covenant, be made an occasion of the enriching the *Gentiles*; how much greater accession of the *Gentiles* will there be into a visible church-state, when the *Jewish* nation, in general, shall be called into a visible church-state again.—Upon this he falls into a discourse about his great concern for the *Jews*, and their being ingrafted again into a visible church-state, and into the way of salvation by Christ; and speaks of the wonderful effect their reception into covenant will have upon the *Gentiles*, who, till that time, will remain dead in trespasses and sins.—Then comes in the text Mr. S. refers to: “If *the first fruits* be holy, the “lump is also holy: and if *the root* be holy, so “are the branches.” *The first fruits*, and *the root*, doubtless signify, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, with the rest of *the patriarchs*; but especially “*Abraham*, with whom the covenant was “made as the root of that nation, from whom the “whole nation sprung, and by whom it was con- “secrated to God, as the offering of the first fruits “sanctified the whole product of the harvest, and “the

“ the offering of a cake, or of two loaves, sanctified the whole lump of dough,” *Levit. xxiii. 10—17.* and *Numb. xv. 19, 20, 21.* So *Abraham* was visibly separated to God, and became federally holy by that *everlasting covenant, which he established with him, to be a God to him, and to his seed after him.* Hence, if *Abraham*, who was the root of administration to the *Jewish* church, in the line of *Isaac* and *Jacob*; if they were federally holy, as he was their covenant father, then there is reason to hope, tho’ they are now broken off by unbelief, that they will be brought in, to the faith and all the privileges of a church-state again, to join with those that were grafted in by *incision*, when the *natural* branches were broken off.—Mr. S. may consider, if he thinks it worth his while, whether representing *the first fruits*, the first *Jewish* converts, under the present dispensation of the covenant, is not a false interpretation of the text? Whether the similitude taken from the ceremonial law, concerning the *first fruits*, and that from the law of nature, concerning the *root*, is not the same? And whether the holiness of *the lump*, and of *the branches*, doth not respect the holiness of the *Jews*, in their ancient covenant-relation to God, as an holy people?—If this is not true, how could the Apostle say, verse 17. *Some of the branches were broken off?* Doth not this refer to those *Jews*, who were cut off from their covenant claim?—And if so, then *the grafting in*, must respect the *Gentiles*, who had been *strangers* to the covenant of grace, and, like the branches of a wild olive-tree, were useless and unprofitable; but are *now* set in the place of those that were broken off, among the remnant of the *Jews* that were not broken off, as I have considered under

der the 3^d head of my first argument, to which I refer the reader.—But, says Mr. S. (P. 17.) “the
 “ root and fatness, which they partook of, are not
 “ the privileges of the *Jewish* church; but the pri-
 “ vileges of the new-testament church, of which
 “ Christ is the root and foundation-stone.”——
 Pray, Mr. S. who supposes that Christ is not the
 root and foundation of the church, in the most
important sense? It has been expressly granted
 that he is the root of *communication* to the church,
 under the present dispensation of the covenant of
 grace. He has purchased all the blessings of time
 and eternity; the food we eat and the raiment we
 put on: and not only all temporal, but all spiri-
 tual and eternal blessings: and as Head and Lord
 of all, he *communicates* these blessings.——And
 was not Christ the root of *communication* to the
 church, under the former dispensation of the co-
 venant, in the same sense that he is now? Did
 not God the Father accept of his engagement as
fully, as if he had been actually incarnate? Was
 not he set up, and accepted, and constituted Head
 over all things from everlasting? Was he not as
 truly the foundation of the *Jewish*, as of the chris-
 tian church? If not, how could the covenant be
 primarily made with him, as the Mediator, Head
 and Surety of it?——But, this hinders not but
Abraham was the root of *administration* to the
Jewish church and nation, as their federal father;
 and therefore the branches were *relatively* holy by
 the constitution of that covenant, which was made
 with him and his seed. And real saints were as
lively stones, built up a spiritual house, upon Jesus
 Christ the sure foundation, in the *Jewish* as well
 as the christian church.—But, doth it follow from
 thence,

thence, (as Mr. S. argues) that the prerequisite to the initiating seal of the covenant is faith, either under the former or the present dispensation of the covenant?—Faith, indeed, or the profession of it, is a prerequisite in the adult, and so it was of old: but it is easy for any honest man to see, that infants may be as proper materials for the christian as for the *Jewish* church. And to what purpose does Mr. S. bring the text of *lively stones*? Does he think that real saints were not as lively stones, under the former dispensation of the covenant, as now, tho' the pomp and grandeur of their temple was of dead materials? Or would he thereby insinuate into weak minds, that the merciful grant of church membership which was made to children formerly, is now repealed? Perhaps his performance will meet with no reader so penetrating as to see the text referred to will prove a repeal. And, without boasting, he may be challenged to bring any text in the Bible, or any fair and just inference from one, that will prove a repeal.—Now, if he has not proved a repeal, he has proved nothing against my argument. And if there is no repeal of the merciful grant, then the favour belongs to the children still, and they cannot be debarred without *sacrilegiously* keeping back what God claims as his. To refuse the seal of baptism to the seed of believers, is to rob God of what he has appropriated to himself.—Therefore I do humbly entreat all those that love and fear God, and have opportunity and ability to search after the truth without prejudice, to consider whether a spirit of *enthusiasm* or self-fulness has not drawn them aside, if they are already carried off from our scripture doctrine of infant-baptism? Children

dren of believers must have the token of the covenant put upon them, in the right of their parents faith, in obedience to a command that never has been repealed.—A profession of faith is required of none but the adult, before they receive the token of the covenant.

The next assault is upon my 2d argument, where I asserted that the infants of believers are *disciples* of Christ.—From this, after Mr. S. has quoted *Luk. xiv. 26—33.* he takes a perfect ramble for about a page and a half. This put me in mind of the preachments of run-about exhorters; or rather of *Tom Puzzle* in the *Tatler*, who made a great bluster, nothing to his purpose. But after he descended from the clouds, his *electric* fire catch'd upon Mr. *Stennet*; and by his assistance, he endeavours to prove (*Page 20, 21.*) that none can be disciples without being *first* taught; and that teaching preceeds baptism.

To this I answer, 1. Mr. *Stennet* has well observed that such teaching as produceth *faith in Christ, and subjection to his gospel*, is necessary to produce the good effects spoken of *Luk. xiv. 26, &c.* None but those that are effectually called will faithfully discharge the duty of disciples. Yet, 2. the term *disciple* is the same with *scholar*; and to *disciple*, is to enter into a school for being trained up according to the laws and rules of the master of that school. See *Mat. xxviii. 19. Go TEACH all nations.* Greek, *MATHETEUSATE panta ta ethne.* Introduce the nations of the earth, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, into my kingdom, as scholars into my school, by a sacred rite of my own appointment.—

Mr.

Mr. *Stennet* challenges us to produce an instance of any that were disciples before they were taught. And I did produce instances, in my 2^d argument, which Mr. *S.* has wisely declined offering one word of evidence to prove that they were not true. And indeed, neither he, nor any other person can *justly* doubt, whether the *yoke* spoken of *Acts* xv. was circumcision or not? And if it was circumcision, then infants are included among the disciples. That which is done to infants, is done to disciples, and therefore they are disciples, as I have proved in my first Sermon.—Yet, it may be added; persons may be, and have been disciples without real subjection to Christ. *Judas* was a disciple: all that *Saul* could find of *that way*, were disciples, and many of the *Jews* were disciples, that turned away, and walked no more with him. And Christ himself has taught us that infants are disciples, *Mat.* x. 42. *Mark* ix. 41. *Mat.* xviii. 5.—Besides; for any to deny that infants were included in our Saviour's commission to *disciple* all nations, would involve the apostles and their successors in the ministry, in a contradiction: for nations are to be disciplined; and infants are a part of every nation.—Tho' none will go to heaven, but such as have the spirit of martyrdom, yet whole nations may be disciples of Christ. If they are entered into his school; if they are put in the way of salvation, and put into the enjoyment of spiritual privileges, they are disciples.

Mr. *S.* to help his weak cause, “twists and turns” many ways against this argument. He tells his readers (*Page* 22.) that our Saviour in *Mark* xvi. 16. has shewed “the exact order which is to be observed,—first preaching, then believing, then baptizing.”

baptizing.” And so, in effect, he charges me with inverting the order which Christ has established.— To this it may, perhaps, be satisfying to Mr. S. if I tell him that Dr. Gill, in his *antinomian* Sermon upon eternal Justification, tells me, “ the order of things is frequently inverted in Scripture. — It does not always observe that first which is first ; and that last which is last ? but changes the order ; so that nothing strictly is to be concluded from thence.”—But I add further ; that if Mr. S. designed to prove from that text, that infants may not be baptized, because they can’t believe, why has he not spoke it out in so many words ? Did he foresee the evil, and hide himself ? Surely he might have seen, that it would as necessarily follow, that when they can’t believe, they must be damned.—That which will receive infants into heaven, will receive them into the visible church by baptism.

I confess, it appears strange, that a Gentleman, who pretends to be far above a *smatterer* in *Greek*, should boggle and try to blunder his readers about the commission Christ gave his ministers. For it is evident, from that commission, that the first work they had to do, was to *profelyte* or *admit* all nations into the school of Christ, *baptizing* and *teaching* them. “ And when parents gave in their names to Christ for themselves, and their families, their whole house were discipled, or admitted into his school. Among the *Jews*, being *discipled* was not being first taught, and then initiated to a master ; but they were initiated to a master, and then taught. So all *Israel* was baptized into *Moses*, 1 *Cor. x.* not as already taught, but to be instructed

ed and guided by him for the future." Nor can it reasonably be supposed but the apostles, who were *Jews*, must needs understand the commission in the same latitude that they had been accustomed to. They had all along "seen, that in all covenant transactions betwixt God and his church, the infants of believers had always been admitted, together with their parents, and passed under the same initiating rite." They also knew this their admission was a great privilege: they also knew that all nations were soon to partake of all the privileges of the church; to be grafted into the same olive-tree, and to be joint-heirs with them of all their religious grants. They also knew it to be the practice of the church, that when a *Gentile* was proselyted to the worship of the God of *Israel*, not only he was baptized, but all his infant seed." How therefore was it *morally* possible, how could it consist with reason for them to think but they must in the prosecution of their commission, go and practise in all things as formerly, where Jesus Christ himself had not made a difference?—Could they imagine that infants, who had been *always* enrolled in the list of disciples, should now be excluded, without one word offered by their Master to exclude them? Let Mr. S. shew in his next, where Christ has shut them out of this privilege; or by what prohibition he has forbid their enjoying the merciful grant made them, any longer: or else let him, like an honest man, confess that they are no where debarr'd; for he must, either prove that they are excluded, or must allow them the christian rite of baptism, or else, *armis pollentior astus*.

In the next place Mr. S. falls upon my 3^d ar-
N
gument;

gument. And, 1. He denies that federal holiness gives a right to baptism; (see *Page 23.*) and gives this wonderful reason for it, *viz.* not federal holiness, but a “profession of faith,” gives a right.— If he has any meaning to this, besides keeping the mask which he has taken to himself, it must be, that those who *appear* to be in covenant with God are the subjects of baptism, and no others: for what is to be understood by a profession of faith, but a profession of a covenant interest in Christ? — Now, there is, at least, as good evidence that the infants of believers are in covenant, as that any who profess faith and repentance are so. I mean here, that we have as good reason to think they are regenerate, as to believe it of those who say they are converted: for we have proved that God has taken them into covenant *visibly*; and he has also made many great and precious promises to them.— But Mr. S. seems jealous that what he has offered of a profession of faith giving a right to baptism will hardly serve his purpose; and therefore he *hurries* from that, and says “it is only the “command of God that gives a right to an ordinance of God;” *i. e.* (as he has explained it) no man has a right to institute any ordinance as a sign or seal of the covenant; nor may any man pretend to observe any rite as an ordinance, before God himself has appointed it. See to this effect *Page 23, 24.*— He might as well have said, that no person has a right to that which has no existence. And I am willing he should exult in all the triumph, which that arguing can possibly give him.— My argument supposes an ordinance of God; that this ordinance is the initiating token of the covenant. And if Mr. S. has done nothing to in-
validate

validate the major proposition, besides what I have observed, it will only serve to show his readers, that he has more use for the mask, than, perhaps, he himself is aware of. And indeed, considering his principles stand in more need of it than any denomination of Protestants that I ever met with, it is no wonder he scrabbles so earnestly after it.——But

He soon comes to a common objection, and calls in the help of his brethren.—It is against the *minor* proposition in my argument, *viz.* “The infants of visible believers are federally holy.” 1 *Cor.* vii. 14. And, tho’ he has summoned many witnesses to help his cause, he can’t support falshood by them. He might, with more propriety, have called in *Richard Stapleton*, a zealous and bitter Papist, who lived *A. D.* 1597, and *R. Bellarmine* a famous cardinal at *Rome*, *A. D.* 1599, as his vouchers, besides many others of the *Romish* church.——But, among Protestants, I might easily quote many against him, where he can produce one in his favour.

It is enough for us both, to let the Apostle speak for himself; and, if he is allowed to speak common sense, we must grant that he writes of a *federal*, and not a *matrimonial* holiness.——Mr. S. says, the holiness is “that which renders the offspring legally begot and not bastards.” To this effect see *Page* 25, 26.—Against this, I have affirmed that it is a *federal* holiness; that they are externally, relatively, and federally holy; a seed visibly separated and appropriated to the Lord, and intitled to those outward privileges of the covenant,
which

which they are capable of in their infancy.— That Mr. *Stennet*, Dr. *Gill*, (and Mr. *S.* after them) should call it a *matrimonial* holiness, in opposition to a *federal* holiness, is not a little difficult to reconcile with common sense. For the believer and unbeliever mentioned, are both of them supposed to be in a married state, while in a state of heathenism. Now one of them is converted to the christian faith; a scruple arises, whether the other ought not to be put away, because he or she remains in heathenism still. No, says *Paul*; your case is very different from the case of the *Israelites*, who were forbid to marry with the daughters of idolatrous nations, both on a *religious* and *civil* consideration. And tho' you ought not to marry unbelievers; yet, being married in a state of unbelief, you may not put away husband or wife that continues in unbelief, merely because you are converted to the christian faith: for, *how knowest thou, O believing wife*, whether by still continuing to dwell in love, with thy unbelieving husband, thou mayest not be an instrument of gaining him over to the christian faith? Or *how knowest thou, O man*, being a believer, but thou mayest be an instrument of converting thy unbelieving wife?

Besides; the terms *unclean* and *holy*, which frequently occur in the *Old* and *New Testament*, are never used to signify *legitimate* and *illegitimate*: “ And as the Apostle was speaking of persons already married, and marriage is a civil ordinance of the God of nature, there was no room to doubt whether the children of such unbelieving parents were *legitimate* or not, since that depends *entirely* upon

upon the legitimacy of the *marriage*, and not on the *religious* character of the husband or wife; whether one or both, or neither of them, were Christians or no."—But as it was with the parent, so it was with the child, as to church-state or federal holiness; that being a privilege which descends from parent to child. If the parents were out of the pale of the visible church, the child was so too: if parents were enrolled with the people of God, the children were reckoned, in a qualified sense, members of the visible church. But when the parents were divided, the one *holy*, the other *unclean*, in this case, the *Corinthians* feared the children would be *unclean* with the unbelieving parent. The Apostle removes the scruple, (as was observed) by telling them that the unbelieving party does not defile the issue: but the child is *holy*, and not to be reckoned with the unbelieving parent, who was a *Gentile*. In this way *Paul* took off the perplexing scruples both as to themselves and their children.—Indeed, he could not mean that the children of believers were *morally* clean; for they are, in this sense, as unclean by nature, as the children of other people. Nor could he mean that they were all regenerated by the Holy Ghost; for sad experience teaches us, that many children, who are federally holy, are not born from above; as also, we see the same sad truth of many professors, baptized in their adult age. “ But *unclean* and *holy* are manifestly to be
“ taken here, in that well known and familiar
“ sense, in which the church of *Israel*, and their
“ seed, by virtue of their visible relation to God,
“ as his covenant people, were called *an holy peo-*
“ *ple*, and *an holy seed*, in distinction from the
“ *heathen*

“ heathen nations, which were stiled *unclean*, as
 “ being out of the pale of the church, and ex-
 “ cluded from the privileges and blessings of God’s
 “ covenant.” See for this, *Deut. vii. 6. Ezra*
ix. 2. Isai. vi. 13. Chap. lii. 1. and lxii. 12. So
 the parents and children of the visible church are
 called *holy*, as in *Rom. xi. 16.* and the *Gentiles*, in
 their unconverted state, are represented as *unclean*,
Acts x. 14, 28. “ When therefore the infants
 of visible believers are baptized, it is no more set-
 ting a seal to a blank, than when that ordinance
 is administered to persons, who never were bap-
 tized before, upon their open profession of faith,
 but were not effectually called: for the ground of
 baptizing infants or those that are adult, does not
 lie in a *certainty*, but in a *visible* covenant rela-
 tion to God. When parents make a credible pro-
 fession of faith and repentance, a visible holiness
 is entailed on their children, and they have an e-
 vident right to the initiating token of the cove-
 nant.”

But Mr. *S.* *learnedly* adds, “ If it be a holiness
 “ which gives the children a right to baptism,—
 “ then all the children of such parents must have
 “ a right to it, from the qualification derived from
 “ their parents—even to 50 years old, &c.” But
 with the leave of those that are more learned *even*
 than Mr. *S.* I will venture to affirm, that it is
 possible those children may cast themselves out of
 covenant, before they arrive to half the age he has
 fixed upon; yea, as soon as they are capable of
 moral action; for being in covenant does not ne-
 cessarily imply regeneration.—If it did, no man
 living might baptize, either man, woman, or child,
 —Nor

—Nor yet, does it appear from any thing he has offered, that they can claim this right by their parents, after they are grown to years capable to judge for themselves. So long as they are in a state of infancy, there is as good ground of hope concerning them, as concerning those that profess faith in their adult age. The proper ground of baptizing infants or adult, does not lie in a *certainty* of their being endued with the saving grace of God, but in their *visible* covenant relation to God, as I but just observed. And this is full as manifest, by God's promise to the seed of believers, as it is by the profession of faith in the adult.

Having considered what Mr. S. offered against my 3^d, let us now attend to his reasonings against my 4th argument.—Page 27. he says “it has been already prov'd, that in the scriptural sense, the meet subjects of the gospel church are such, who are capable of professing their faith in Christ, which infants are not.”—But what does such arguing reprove? Will it follow, that infants of believers are not in the visible kingdom of Christ, because such as are capable of professing their faith are meet subjects of that kingdom? Who denies that such as are capable of professing faith are meet subjects of the visible church? This is not the point in question; nor can it serve any purpose, but for a mask to the writer, and an amusement to weak or inattentive readers. If Mr. S. would have done any thing against my argument, he must have proved that *only* those that profess their faith are capable or meet subjects of the visible kingdom of Christ, which neither he nor his fathers have ever

ever been able to do.—Nor will his calling the visible kingdom of Christ, *the gospel church*, help the matter at all; for God never had any other than a gospel church since the fall of *Adam*. I hope, in his next, he will keep to the point, and either offer some good evidence that *none* but believers are the subjects of Christ's visible kingdom, or honestly confess that he is not able to prove it.

Some things that have no relation to my arguments I wholly pass over, tho' if I should pass by all of that nature, the greatest part of what he has wrote would be neglected.—*Page 28.* he says, “according to Mr. *P.* it is the Scripture doctrine that is false; because it will not join with him in admitting infants as members of the visible church.”—And what light does he offer to support this wonderful discovery? Why truly this, *viz.* “I can find no account of any infants being baptized—till the latter end of the *2d* or beginning of the *3d* century.” *Q. D.* If a man of so great reading and penetration as I am, has not found that infant-baptism is of earlier date than the *2d* or *3d* century, then it is the Scripture doctrine that Mr. *P.* represents as false doctrine. For, all the knowledge of this matter, that is contained in the Bible or profane history, *lives in me.*—*Actum erit de ecclesia, cum ille morietur.*—*Non sublimius sapit quam ille.*—But, as the history of infant-baptism belongs to my last argument, I shall add no more in this place; except a word or two of *Latin*; *Vana scientiæ opinione imbutus.*

In the next place he tells his readers, that I *publickly patronize Arminianism, and give it a kind reception.*

ception. And why has he asserted this with much pretended sorrow? *Ans* Because of the glaring evidence of my apostasy, which he finds in these words, *viz.* “The only ground of hope that we can have of infants being the members of Christ, by a vital union, arises from their visible membership.” Upon this he represents me, as rejecting the covenant of grace, and the satisfaction of Christ, and setting up the act of the parent or minister instead thereof, &c. See P. 28, 29.—’Tis usual with *Grub-street* writers to pretend their design is to reform the church; and this, they imagine, will excuse any slanders. But who, except Mr. S. could have the *forehead* or *folly* to misrepresent me in this manner? Who, that has common sense, can help fearing this was a contrived fraud, if he gives himself the trouble to read what I have written upon that head?—If Mr. S. would do honour to God, and to his own labouring character, he must confess that, in many places, especially in this, he has misrepresented me, either through great weakness, or through wickedness.—I desire the reader to consider, what ground of hope he can have, that another is interested in the covenant of grace, or the spiritual privileges, or special blessings of the Mediator’s purchase, unless the ground is *visible*? Can Mr. S. by his great penetration, or by *leger demain*, persuade his admirers that a person is vitally united to Christ, by any *invisible* evidence? Or can he, upon *antinomian* principles, show his readers a method or ground of hope for the salvation of others, without a *visible* ground of hope for it? I say once more, that it is impossible for any man living, to judge of that which is, to him, *invisible*, any other

ther way than by that which is *visible*. And if Mr. S. does not confess in his next, let him make the art of reasoning *quake* before his mighty consequences; or else he will be hardly put to it to prove, that I have given *Arminianism* a kind reception. He has laid his charge too high, considering he brought no evidence to support it: but possibly it was in his mind, that if a person should confidently affirm, *he believes, perceives, or has a sense of his justification*, that should be received for good evidence of it, not to himself only, but to others. Or, might he not, from a pious concern lest the *infection of bad divinity, dangerous doctrine, &c.* should spread, advise his devoted readers to find out some ground of hope concerning infants, dying in infancy, without any pretence of evidence? I shall not pretend to guess at the *certain* meaning of that *elaborate* part of his pamphlet; but I really believe it was his own.

Again; he says, "To render my argument the more plausible, I have quoted *Matt. xix. 14.*" See P. 29. This he thinks will not serve my end, because Christ baptized none. True; Jesus Christ, for wise reasons, baptized none with his own hands, tho' he entered such a multitude of disciples into his school by baptism, that it made his malicious enemies rage. But it is nothing against, nor in favour of my argument, whether he baptized or not. My argument is, that the infants of believers have a *right* to baptism, because *they are members of the visible church*. Our Saviour, in the text referred to, plainly intimates, that their covenant interest, and visible church membership, should be continued under the present dispensation. *Of such is the kingdom*

kingdom of heaven. The argument for infant-baptism from this text I grounded upon the words Christ uttered on the occasion; and not upon his practice; as the reader may see by turning to the argument itself.—Mr. S's long quotation from *Dr. Gill*, cannot help his cause, in the minds of those who consider the reason why those infants were brought to Christ. It was not for instruction; for they were incapable of that. It was not for the cure of bodily diseases; for then the disciples would not have rebuked those that brought them, because they knew it was usual for Christ to cure diseases in all ages.—But they were the infants of parents in covenant with God. Christ was then on the coasts of *Judea*, as minister of the circumcision, *Matt. xv. 24.* and *Rom. xv. 8.* If these infants were not in covenant, why did our Saviour admit them? He did not do so, when the *Canaanitish* woman came with her child, *Matt. xv. 26.* But he admitted these little children upon a common right, which belongs to the children of believing parents, *viz.* because they were members of the visible church; and therefore they had a church privilege bestowed upon them. *He laid his hands upon them,* “according to an ancient “rite of the *Jewish* church in benedictions,” and blessed them. Now, tho' this was not brought for a direct precedent for baptism in particular, yet it is a clear precedent for those church privileges of which infants are capable. None that are visible members of the church, may be denied admission by baptism. Those that are admitted to one church privilege, may not be denied another of which they are capable. And those that are admitted to church privileges are church members.

bers. Our Saviour teaches us very plainly, that the children of believers are, in a qualified sense, members of the visible church; that this privilege should be continued to them under the new dispensation of the covenant as it was before. And Jesus Christ accepted the dedication of them as the act and deed of the parents; therefore he took it ill of those that forbid them, and that would have excluded those whom he would have received. His saying nothing about their being baptized, is not at all unfavourable to the doctrine of infant-baptism. It is enough that he has said they are members of the church. And if they were not capable of being admitted into the visible church, they would stand without any visible ground of hope of their salvation, *Eph. i. 12.* For any to conclude that a person is not interested in the covenant of grace, is to doom that person to hell. *By nature all are children of wrath;* and neither Mr. S. nor any other man, can find out any visible ground of hope for their salvation, if they are put out of the covenant.—He may indeed, with *Bellarmino*, set up a *limbus patrum*, as he fights against infants with *Bellarmino's* weapons; for it is as evident as any conclusion can follow from its premises, that infants dying without any interest in the covenant of grace, do perish for ever, unless there is a place in hell from whence they are delivered, after some proper time of purgation. And even Mr. S. if he believes that doctrine, I can hardly think will readily own it.

Upon my 5th argument, he says, P. 31. that
 “ I make baptism to bring infants into, and seal
 “ them in the covenant of grace.” Here again
 he

he imposes upon his readers, and the Searcher of hearts knows his design in it. If the reader will carefully look over the argument, he may see that I have not given the least colour for Mr. S. to assert that *I make baptism to bring infants into the covenant of grace.* If I have asserted any such thing, why are not my own words produced to prove it? Mr. S. must know, if he understands plain *English*, that I say, the infants of believing parents are interested in the covenant of grace, and therefore have a right of induction by the initiating token of the covenant.—But having asserted that falshood, he draws this inference from it, *viz.* “ Then all the children of believers who
 “ are baptized, must be intitled to the blessings
 “ of that covenant, which are justification, adop-
 “ tion, sanctification, and the gift of the Holy
 “ Ghost,” &c.—Now, if the premises had been ever so true, the consequence is really no consequence at all: for children may be interested in the covenant of grace, and never be justified in the sight of God, nor sanctified by the Holy Spirit.—Sanctified indeed, they are; but may be *only* a federal sanctification, as they stand in a covenant relation to God; as those, *Heb. x. 29.* They are separated from the world, and dedicated to God by covenant.—In this sense all the congregation of *Israel* were holy, *Corah* and his followers not excepted, *Numb. xvi. 3, 9.* There is a sanctification by dedication to God, and a sanctification by the indwelling of the Spirit. In the former sense, all the visible church are sanctified; but the indwelling of the Spirit is proper to them only who are effectually called. In the former sense, the infants of believing parents are sanctified: God
 has

has separated them from the world, and requires their dedication to him at the hands of their parents. But they may *totally* and *finally* fall away from this grace of the covenant, though they shall never fall from the grace of effectual calling.

Whoever reads my 5th argument with care and due attention, will plainly see, not only that Mr. S. has misrepresented me in what I have quoted from him already; but more grossly in what follows, *viz.* Page 32. "As to the privileges of the christian church being less than the privileges of the Jewish church, because of the denial of infant-baptism; *it is mere noise without any substance.*" And to prove this he says that the blessings of the covenant were exhibited by types and shadows; but now they shine in their unclouded lustre.—The Jewish church was made up of lively and dead materials, but the gospel church, of professed lively materials.—Infants were circumcised, and so bound to keep the whole law, from which bondage they are delivered.—And those that have leisure and opportunity, may see what he says, and many other things in a book upon Scripture metaphors first put out by B. K.—After a long parade, nothing to the purpose in hand, he comes to a 4th head, and says, that we say the *Anabaptists* "lessen the privileges of the gospel, by not admitting infants into the gospel church; seeing the infants of the Jews were admitted into the Jewish church." I take it for granted they are his own words, because he gives the credit of them to nobody else. But, since he pretends to write against what I have printed, he would have discovered as much honesty, if he had kept close to my terms.

He

He must know better than to suppose the church of God, under the ancient dispensation, was not as truly a gospel church, as the church of God under the present dispensation. Why then should he, again and again, intimate the contrary, unless it is to deceive his readers? To dishonour the scriptures of the *Old Testament*, and to represent its promises sensual and carnal? Or to take the infants of believers out of covenant with God, and so, with the Papists, to conclude their damnation? For without doubt, all out of covenant with God are in a perishing condition. Or does he intimate this to keep the children of believers from baptism? I suppose it is the last. For he says, *Page 33*. “ It was a privilege to the children of the *Jews* to be admitted into the *Jewish* church, in their infancy, by circumcision: but it is no privilege to our children to be admitted into the gospel church by baptism.” The same *his* excellent Mr. *Morgan* has said before him.—But neither the one nor the other has given any evidence of the truth of their assertion, unless *positive* assertions will do for evidence. They both confess it was a privilege to the children of the *Jews*; and that they were admitted in consequence of God’s command: but offer no reason why it is not a privilege to admit the children of believers into the visible church by baptism, under the present dispensation; as it was to admit them by circumcision under the former.—Why did not Mr. *S.* or his *champion*, prove the point, if it were proveable?—We have asserted the contrary, and are able to support our assertion by good evidence. For, if it was the command of God that they should be admitted into the church, by the initiating token of the covenant, under the

former

former dispensation; and if that command is nowhere repealed, (as I have already observed) then it is as much the command of God to admit them now, as under the former dispensation. The change of a token of the covenant, does not argue the change of the subject, unless the law for admitting infants had been repealed. And if the command continues in force, it must be a privilege to admit them; for obedience to the command of God, strongly infers a privilege.

But, Mr. S. tells us, that “by baptizing our children and taking them into the gospel church, we lessen the glory of the building, which is to consist of *lively stones*, &c.” alluding to 1 *Pet.* ii. 5. But he says, our children are dead materials.”—Tho’, to pursue the metaphor in his own way, we have full as much reason to believe that numbers which he and others plunge under water, are dead materials; as that the infants of believing parents are so.—But Mr. S. does awfully pervert the plain sense of the Apostle, as will easily be seen by considering his own words: *To whom coming as unto a living Stone; i. e.* coming unto Christ is the way and condition, of being built as living stones. And this was the case with some to whom *Peter* wrote this epistle, but not with others. Some daily applied to Christ by faith for edification, as unto the only foundation of all their security; hope and happiness; and they were as *living stones*; being vitally united to, and deriving virtue from Christ, who was their living and enlivening foundation; others who professed Christ, like other hypocrites, lived upon themselves; and so were as a dead weight upon those they were visibly united with.—’Tis indeed

indeed the beauty of the church, under any dispensation of the covenant of grace, to have professors coming daily to Christ, as to *a living stone*. Did not the church in the wilderness receive *the lively oracles of God*, by *Moses*, *Acts*, vii. 38 ? And were not these oracles spirit and life, to all that received them by faith, as the word of the living God ? And yet they did not mar the beauty and glory of the church under that dispensation, by admitting their children. No: this was one part of its beauty in their day. And so the church, under the present dispensation, is built upon Christ, *the living stone* ; and all true Christians, that are daily coming to him by faith, are lively stones. But this is no argument against, but much in favour of admitting their children to baptism.——

But Mr. S. says, “ I can’t find it does children any good to baptize them.”——And what if I should say, I can’t find it does adult professors any good to baptize them ? Would my ignorance be an argument that they have no privileges superior to them that are not baptized ? Would it do the reader any good to find that I was very ignorant ? or that I never attended properly to what the Scriptures have taught us in this matter ?——What advantage had the *Jew* ? His being circumcised no more secured his salvation, than if he had been a heathen. And yet *Paul* tells us, there was *much profit* in circumcision, and that *every way*. Tho’ these outward privileges bear no part in the grounds of acceptance with God ; yet, in the nature of means and helps, the *Jews* had thereby many prerogatives above the *Gentiles*. See *Rom.* iii. 1, 2. *Chap.* ix. 4, 5. And the token of the covenant is as beneficial under the present, as it was under the former

dispensation. And baptism, as a christian sacrament, comes in the room of circumcision, Col. ii. 11, 12. As circumcision in the flesh was a sign of spiritual circumcision, so baptism is *the answer of a good conscience towards God.* Both these sacraments are a solemn obligation upon conscience to return a suitable answer to the demands of the living God. Now, the signification being the same, baptism must come in the room of the former rite of admision. The Apostle tells us, not only that believers should partake of the thing signified by the rite of circumcision, but that God has also substituted another external ordinance, of like use, signification and design, more suitable to the simplicity of the state of the church under the present dispensation.—But if the infants of believing parents were not to be baptized, a strong objection would arise against the glory of the church under the new dispensation of the covenant of grace, as to external and spiritual privileges; since the children of the *Israelites*, under the former dispensation, were circumcised as well as others.—But the great difficulty with Mr. S. is, he does not find it does children any good. He may consider, if he has a heart to it, as one that must give an account to God, whether it is no *hurt*, to shut those out of the covenant, whom God has taken in?—I may affirm, without boasting, that the arguments offered do fully prove that the infants of believing parents are included in the covenant, and, by a divine command, they had a right to the initiating token of it.—Also it has been proved, that the law demanding the token of the covenant to be administered to infants, has never been revoked: and therefore it must be as fully in force now

as formerly, unless Mr. S. or some of his *anabaptist* predecessors have a *secret* or *invisible* warrant to revoke it. How then will they answer it to God, or a good conscience, that they *despise* the token of the covenant administered to children, since God has enjoined it, and never repealed it? Is it no duty nor privilege to obey God? Is it no privilege to be admitted and incorporated in the visible church? No privilege to be brought into a *political* union with Christ? No privilege that we and ours are his *visible* subjects? No privilege to have a joint interest with all other members of the visible church in the providential care of its glorious head? And is not the whole *Israel* of God the proper object of special providence? See *Psal.* cxxi. 4. *Isai.* xxvii. 3. *Heb.* i. 14.—Besides; are not the members of the visible church the more special objects of the promises of saving grace? particularly the promises in *Isai.* liv. 13. *Jer.* xxxi. 31. &c.—Further; is it no privilege to have the promises sealed and confirmed to them, in an external manner? May not our children, under a sense of sin and danger, ground a plea for mercy, as they are a part of God's *Israel*?—If these things are privileges; then it is the glory of the church, under the present dispensation of the covenant, to have the children of believers acknowledged, and sealed with the initiating token of the covenant, as much as formerly.

To my 6th argument, Mr. S. objects, 1. That "I should have first told my readers that *Zaccheus* was a married man, and then proved it," and the like of *Lydia*, P. 35. If Mr. S. understood himself, and the rules of fair reasoning, he must consider

consider *me* as *respondent*, and *himself* as *opponent*. And then the labouring oar would lie upon him to prove, that neither *Zaccheus*, nor *Lydia*, were married; or if they *were*, they had no children. But he knew that but few of his admirers understood the art of thinking, and much less the art of reasoning and ranging their thoughts in words; and therefore “mere noise without any substance,” would serve his purpose as well as any thing.— To suppose there were no children in their houses, is to take that for granted, which is impossible to prove. He knows, I hope, that as a *fair* respondent, I might put him to prove even that impossibility. But instead of that, I would observe, it is certain that a man’s or woman’s household, &c. all along in the *Old Testament*, signify the whole family, which includes all the children of the family. And there is no room to doubt, but when *Zaccheus* began his praises to God, and *Lydia* had her heart opened to receive the Lord, they took up the resolution of *David* respecting the *adult*, viz. If they would *not* give in their names to Christ, they should *not* dwell in their house, nor *tarry* in their sight; *i. e.* they would reject them from the number of their family. And as to the *infants* of their house, they were baptized in the right of their believing parents. As it was a well known custom among the *Jews*, to admit proselytes into the church of *Israel* by baptizing them and their whole families, inclusive of their infants, there is a plain reference to this custom, where it is said *Zaccheus* and his house, *Lydia* and her household, and the Jailor and all his were baptized. And it is remarkable, that in the *Acts of the Apostles*, God’s covenant with his people and their
eed,

seed, and the application of the new testament seal of it to children, as well as to grown persons, is strongly intimated, first with respect to the converted *Jews*, afterwards to *profelytes of the gate*, and again to *the idolatrous Gentiles*. * I am not concerned, however, in the present controversy, whether *Zaccheus* or *Lydia* were married; or whether they had children, the offspring of their own bodies. It is enough that they had families, including children, that were admitted members of the visible church, and included in that covenant which says "I will be a God to thee, and to thy *seed*." They had households that were baptized on the foot of the *Abrahamick* covenant. Some, no doubt, were grown up, and instructed in the knowledge of God, and of this covenant, in order to have the token of it applied to them; but there is no more room to doubt but there were children that were baptized in those households than that there were children in *Abraham's* household that were circumcised. Will any say, after Mr. S. that none were baptized but such as heard the word and rejoiced in God? *Ans.* The adult in *Abraham's* house were instructed before they were circumcised: and if *Zaccheus*, *Lydia* and others, had adult persons, as probably they had in their houses, no doubt they were, some way or other, instructed before they were baptized. But for any to say that there were no children baptized in the right of the heads of those families, is really to affirm a thing against the general tenor of the Scripture, which includes children in households.—You will, perhaps, say, that all the baptized believed and rejoiced in God,

* *Vide* Dr. Guise upon *Acts* 16th Chapter.

God, as you suppose appears from *Acts* xvi. 34. But if you understand the *Greek* no better than the smatterer Mr. S. repeatedly tells you of, you will easily see that there is no proof of all *believing and rejoicing* who were baptized. *Greek*; *Egalliasato panoiki pepisteukoos to Theo.* English; *He believing in God rejoiced all over his house.* It has no reference to the faith or joy of his family; but his *only*. And therefore Mr. S. has brought nothing from the Scripture, of any weight, against my last argument.

What he says (*Page* 39.) upon *Acts* ii. 29. is a perversion of the plain sense of the text. *Peter* there tells his hearers, that if they repented and were baptized, they might receive the pardon of their sins, and warrantably hope for *that* blessing: yea, he tells them they ought to *put in* for it, as ever they desired their own, or their children's happiness: "for the promise (*Gen.* xvii. 7.) and particularly the promise *Isai.* xlv. 3. *Ch.* 59, 21. " runs, *to you and your children.*" The blessing of the *Abrahamick* covenant is to come upon the *Gentiles*, as well as the *Jews*, under this new dispensation of the covenant, tho' at present they (*the Jews*) are cut off: yea, it is to come upon all that God shall *call* unto the faith and fellowship of the gospel: the same promise is to them and their children, to be fulfilled in its proper season. The same promises that were unto the *Jews* are as effectual for any of the *Gentiles*. The promise spoken of looks to the covenant made with *Abraham*, and afterwards renewed thro' the ancient dispensation of the covenant, to *Israel* and his seed. Hence it teaches us, that the present dispensation of the same covenant,

covenant, is so far from repealing the promise, that it takes effect among believing *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*. And it is a thing incredible, that when *Gentiles* are incorporated into the same church with the *Jews* which were not broken off from the church, the *Jewish* members should have a right for their children, and the *Gentile* members have none for theirs.

Before I dismiss what Mr. S. has said upon the text but just explained, I desire the serious reader to consider what *honesty* or *policy* there is in saying, “to argue that believing parents are to get their children baptized because the promise is to them,” is no better arguing, than to argue, that “those who are afar off are to be baptized.” I say, what possible honest reason can a man have for such blind talk as this is? Does not Mr. S. know; does not the very letter of the text teach him and every man, that the *promise* refers to the *call*? Those whom the Lord *calls*; tho’ they may *now* be afar off; tho’ now they may be the poor savages in *America*; yet *when* the Lord our God shall *call* them, the promise is to them and their children: and therefore they and their children will *then* have a right to the initiating seal of the covenant.

But to proceed: I have subjoined a scrap of church history to the account that is left us in the bible, touching the doctrine of infant-baptism. And to do Mr. S. justice, he has rightly said *Origen* was the first I mentioned: but he objects, 1. To the *time* of his living, from Mr. *Rees*, that he flourished about 230 years after Christ. I shall not

not dispute the time with him ; but if any one wants evidence of that matter, let him see it in a small piece upon *baptism*, wrote by the *author* of a piece against Dr. *White's* Three Letters. His authority is doubtless equal to what Mr. S. has brought against it. 2. He objects that they are not *Origen's* own words, but a *translation* of him. 'Tis readily acknowledged that in translating *Origen's* works, some things were added to what *Origen* said : but in his commentary upon the *Romans*, wherein he treats of infant-baptism, it is allowed that there are no additions made to his own words. And here he says, *pro hoc et ecclesia, &c. i. e.* " For this also, the church had an apostolick order to baptize infants." And this abundantly proves the baptism of infants was the practice of his time.—But let us mention some of earlier date. Particularly

Justin Martyr : he was arrived to manhood before his conversion ; and afterwards lived to write many things, which recommended him to great esteem, and suffered martyrdom, *A. Christi*, 166. This must needs bring him very near the *apostolick* age, and not far from the middle of it. Now, it is manifest that infant-baptism was practised in his day, from two things, *viz.* 1. From their giving children the eucharist. This was so common a practice in the primitive church, and so well known in history, that I need bring no authorities to prove it. And infant-baptism is evident from thence, because baptism always preceded the Lord's supper ; none were ever admitted to it, but such as were baptized. 2. From his saying that there were then living persons of 60 or 70
years

years old, who were made disciples to Christ in their infancy. For “none could be considered and treated as disciples to Christ from their infancy, without being from their infancy *baptized* :” for all his disciples, or all that had their names entered into his school, were *baptized* by his express command, *Matt.* xxviii. 19.

Irenæus was trained up in christianity from his infancy to the age of a man by *Polycarp* bishop of *Smyrna*. And this same *Polycarp* suffered martyrdom at *Smyrna*, says *Eusebeus*, about the year 166. Soon after this, *Irenæus*, who was a priest, was created bishop of *Lyons*. And according to authentick history he must have lived some years before the apostle *John* died. This *Irenæus* composed many things, in *Greek*, against heresies. The *Greek* is lost; but we have a very ancient *Latin* translation of them. Among other things he says, *Omnes enim venit per semet ipsum salvare; omnes inquam, qui per eum renascuntur in deum, INFANTES et parvulos, et pueros et juvenes; i. e.* “Christ came “to save all persons by himself; all, I say, who by “him are regenerated, or *baptized* unto God, “*INFANTS* and little ones, and boys and youths.” It is justly observed from *Dr. Wall’s* history of infant-baptism, that the word *renascor* is most familiarly used to signify *baptized*, and particularly in the writings of *Irenæus*. And it is well known that the word *INFANTES* signifies *children* before they come to the use of reason. Hence it follows that infant-baptism was practised in his day; and there is no room to doubt but he knew the practice of the apostles in this matter, since he lived some years in *John’s* life-time.

Again ; with little variation from the piece on *infant-baptism*, wrote by the *author* of the answer to Dr. *White's* Three Letters, I shall mention *Tertullian*, who flourished chiefly under the reigns of *Severus* and *Antoninus Caracalla*, from the year 194 till towards the year 216. This same *Tertullian* appears, from many of his writings, to be very *whimsical*, and a man greatly *affecting* singularity. He “ is the only person, among the ancients, who “ advises to *defer* the baptism of infants, *except in* “ *cases of necessity*, or in *danger of death*.”—And again ; he asks ; “ why does that innocent age “ make such haste to the remission of Sins ? (*i. e.* “ *to the laver of baptism*) What occasion is there, “ except in cases of necessity, that the sponsors, or “ *Godfathers*, be brought into danger ?” Now, if infant-baptism had not been practised in those days, how should it come into the mind of the most whimsical person in the world to write against it ? His questions, and desire to have it put off for a season, unless in cases of necessity, are evident proofs of the practice.

I might now offer you the testimony of *Cyprian*, who lived about 150 years after the *Apostles*, and has left his testimony for the practice in his day, (*De lapsis*, section 7.) But as he lived in the time of the *Synod* of 66 Bishops which I referred to in my 6th argument, it may be more convincing to give you a brief account of their result, in answer to one *Fidus*, who was also a bishop. His scruple was, *whether*, in any case, *infants* should be baptized *before the 8th day*, according to the law of circumcision under the former dispensation of the covenant ? To which that Synod
answers,

answers, “ *Quantum vero ad causam infantium*
 “ *pertinet, &c.*— *Longe aliud in concilio nos-*
 “ *tro omnibus visum est; &c.*— *Cæterum si*
 “ *homines impedire aliquid ad consecutionem gra-*
 “ *tiae posset,*” &c. The substance of those parts of
 the result refer’d to, is as follows, *viz.* “ As for
 “ the matter of infants, whom you said, were not
 “ to be baptized within the *second* or *third* day of
 “ their nativity,—it hath appeared to us in our
 “ council, quite contrary; no one maintained your
 “ opinion, but we all judged, that the mercy and
 “ grace of God was to be denied to no man.—
 “ But if any thing can hinder men from baptism,
 “ it will be heinous sins that will debar the *adult*
 “ and *mature* therefrom; and if those who have
 “ sinned extremely against God, yet if afterwards
 “ they believe, and are baptized, and no man is
 “ prohibited from this grace, how much more
 “ ought not an *infant* to be prohibited, who be-
 “ ing but just born, is guilty of no sin, but of or-
 “ riginal, which he contracted in *Adam*?—
 “ Wherefore, dearly beloved, it is our opinion,
 “ that from baptism—none ought to be prohi-
 “ bited by us, which as it is to be observed, and
 “ followed with respect to *all*; so especially with
 “ respect to *infants*, and those that are but just
 “ born.”

Hence, tho’ Mr. S. can’t find a word in all the
 first writers, in favour of infant-baptism, it appears
 to a demonstration, that infant-baptism was
 the constant practice of the church in those times.
 For, *Fidus* does virtually acknowledge that infant-
 baptism was practised in the church; nor did he
 suggest the least scruple about the propriety of it;
 but,

but, as it came in the room of circumcision, his scruple was, whether it should be administered before the *eighth* day. Nor did any one of all that *Synod* make the least question of it, but spake of it as a thing *universally* practised. The decree of that *Synod*, respected the scruple of *Fidus* whether an *infant* should be baptized the *second or third*, or whether it should not be *deferred* till the *eighth* day; and not whether they should be baptized in their *infancy*. “ And as this was but about 150 “ years after the apostles, there is no room to “ doubt but some of those bishops were baptized “ just after the apostles days: and, at the time of “ their baptism, many were alive, who knew the “ apostles themselves, and their practice in this “ point.”

We might quote *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Greg. Nazian*, *Basil*, *Ambrose*, *Chrystom*, and a cloud of witnesses, to show that infant-baptism has been constantly practised from the very *beginning* of christianity: but considering Mr. S. has offered nothing from the earliest writers, that can be of any weight with the judicious reader, it is apprehended that sufficient light has been offered, to make it manifest, that infant baptism was practised in the church, from the apostles to the *3d* century, about the time Mr. S. without proof, endeavours to persuade his readers it took place.—And from that time to this it has been practised in the church: nor was it disputed, except in some few instances, until the *5th* century. What he says (*Page 41.*) from Mr. *Stennet* concerning a profession of holiness, has been fully answered already. We don't pretend but the adult used *then*, as *now*, to make a profession

profession of faith before baptism. But what of all that? Will it follow from thence that the infants of visible believers were not baptized? Or what if two or three instances in a hundred years could be found that had scrupled infant-baptism, (which is not the case in the earliest ages of christianity) even that would prove nothing against the practice of the whole church.

Upon the whole: it appears that infant-baptism was practised by the whole church in the apostolick age; and that it continued, without interruption, down to the time our *learned* writer says it begun; — That it was practised by those that could have no *reasonable* doubt in their minds how the apostles practised in their day; — And therefore, that the apostles themselves had taught and practised the same, and consequently, that when they spake and wrote of baptizing households, they always included the children of such families. — What a shameful imposition, therefore, is it upon mankind, to assert, or so much as to insinuate, as if antiquity was against infant-baptism? If Mr. S. “believes “himself,” in such repeated insinuations, and has read the history of the earliest times and practice of the church, after the apostles, never man read history to less good purpose, as every one may see, who will take due pains to examine ancient practice. And it will be no more than a well grounded confidence that I now *affirm*, from the days of *John* the baptist, unto this very time, the church of Christ has been possess’d of this great privilege *without* interruption, tho’ she has often been assaulted by the adversaries of the truth. If this affirmation is not just, let Mr. S. in his next, vouchsafe

to show his readers when it was not an usage of the church.

I see nothing further, except assuming airs and vain repetitions; but what I have sufficiently noticed till he comes to remark upon what I offered from *Rom. iv. 11*. Upon which he tells me, it is time for me to learn that neither circumcision, nor baptism, is any where in Scripture called a seal of the covenant, &c. Circumcision “was a seal to *Abraham*: but not to his posterity.” (See Page 44.)

Ans. As Mr. S. began with criticising upon words, so he seems disposed to go on — No doubt he expected to gain great advantages from my ignorance and his eminent skill in the languages. — Nor is he *alone* in denying baptism to be a seal of the covenant of grace. *Bellarmino*, and the whole crowd of his *papistical* followers have said the same before him. — But let us consider whether the *Papists* must not fall in this matter, even tho’ Mr. S. steps in to support them.

Perhaps these great men *confound* the seal of the Spirit, and the seal of the covenant of grace; or, at least, consider them of equal extent, when they deny baptism to be a seal. But if they deny it from thence, to say the most favourably of them, they are under an unhappy mistake: for, the seal of the covenant is a privilege of the visible church; but the seal of the Spirit is a privilege of the invisible church. The seal of the covenant belongs to the whole house, in which there are vessels of honour and dishonour; but the seal of the Spirit is proper only

only to such as are *marked out* by God to the day of redemption. The seal of the Spirit is absolute and infallible ; but the seal of the covenant is conditional.

I am sensible that the *Antinomians* join with the *bellarminean* Papists, in saying there is no conditional seal of grace. But if it be so, how can Mr. S. or any of his brethren, administer either baptism, or the Lord's supper, to any of their people, whom they know not that God the Father hath sealed by his Spirit, or will ever save from sin and wrath? Or will Mr. S. say, that he, or any other man, or a whole congregation, or the elders of a church, can determine who it is that God has sealed and will save? Whatever he may *superstitiously* imagine, in his heart, he will not venture to say, that he does not administer sacraments conditionally, as the privilege of the visible church, belonging to those that make a visible profession, whom he knows not that God has justified or will ever save.

But is it not possible that Mr. S. should slip into this error, from taking every thing upon trust that his friend *Bellarmino* has written upon the point? If it be so, "it is time for him to learn" better ; and therefore I will tell him, that both the *Hebrew* and *Greek*, rendered in *English* a SEAL, signifies *a sign whereby a thing is confirmed*. And TO SEAL, is *to sign with some mark, whereby some things or persons may be known from others*. If Mr. S. scruples this account, he may take his *Hebrew* Bible, and examine *Ezra* ix. 38. Chap. x. 1. *Jer.* xxxii. 10—14, 44. and his *Greek* Testament, and read *1 Cor.* ix. 2. *Rom.* xv. 28. *John* vi. 27. &c.

Ec. Ec. If he is acquainted with these languages, and especially if he is a master of them, and examines impartially, perhaps he will find and confess, that I have given him as good an account as he might reasonably expect of “a smatterer.”

—But will he yet say, that a seal always supposes that the thing sealed is fulfilled? If so, I ask him, what is meant by obligations under hand and seal? What are we to understand by the *condition* of an obligation in a bond, unless the condition is doubtful?—He may also consider, whether the seal of circumcision was not only for the confirmation of God’s promises unto *Abraham* and his seed, but of their obligations to be the Lord’s, as well as to assure him of being a partaker of the righteousness of faith?

But, it seems, Mr. S. has found out that circumcision was a seal to *Abraham*, but not to his posterity.—Herein also he follows after *Bellarmino*. But this *popish* shift will not stand the test: for, *Paul* brings in circumcision to be a seal of the righteousness of faith, as a proof of justification by faith alone, which could be no evidence at all, if it had been proper to *Abraham*, and not to others.—And besides; what shall we say of *Moses*, who refers circumcision to the covenant, *Gen. xvii. 7*. If circumcision was a seal to *Abraham*, and not to his seed, then the covenant was with *Abraham*, and not with his seed, which contradicts what *Moses* has expressly taught us.—And let *Bellarmino*’s followers consider how they will clear themselves of several absurdities, which they involve themselves in. Particularly; if circumcision was a seal to *Abraham* only, then the covenant with *Abraham*,

ham, and the covenant with all other old testament believers *essentially* differs, the one from the other. *Abraham* and new testament believers may possibly be under one covenant; but old testament believers must, according to this scheme, be under another covenant essentially differing therefrom, and consequently there must be, at least, two covenants of grace.—Again; if circumcision was a seal to *Abraham* only, then *Zacharias*, expounding the *Abrahamick* covenant, (*Luke* i. 69—75.) and God's *oath* unto *Abraham* and *David*, respecting salvation by Jesus Christ, grossly missed it: for, according to this scheme, he should have limited the mercy to *Abraham* only, and not have extended it to all that followed him, even all that came out of *Egypt*. According to Mr. S. *Zacharias* should have said that “the fathers, who
 “ were under the cloud, and passed thro' the sea,
 “ had not the same promise that *Abraham* had;
 “ and that God did not remember his holy cove-
 “ nant, nor the oath he swore unto *Abraham*.”
 —Yea; according to them, *Abraham* and all Christians are in Christ; but all other believers are under the law, without Christ and without hope: even *Moses* himself must be sadly mistaken, when he put the greatest evils attending religion, and the greatest worldly prosperity in the balances, and then concluded that the heaviest contempt and persecution which the *Israelites* suffered, and he was liable to suffer, were preferable to the greatest emoluments of a fruitful land, and a splendid *Egyptian* court.—Further; it will follow from this wonderful plan, that *Abraham* and Christians have the kingdom of God and shall be saved; but the rest of the *Jews*, poor souls, had nothing bet-

ter than the land of *Canaan* for their portion.—Such as these, and some other, were the absurdities which *Bellarmino* plunged himself into; and Mr. S. zealously following after him, seems “willing to say almost any thing, rather than confess the truth.”

Mr. S. P. 45. undertakes to prove by command or example, that women have a right to the Lord's supper. To this end he adduces *Acts* i. 13, 14. Chap. ii. 41—47. Chap. v. 9, 14. Now, altho' we make no doubt but women may have a right to the Lord's supper; yet I am sure he has brought neither express command nor example to prove it. The utmost that can be proved, respecting women, from the *first* quotation, is, that the disciples continued in prayer together, in the presence of some women.—And as to the *second*, it is not certain from the letter of the text, that one single woman was of the number of *Peter's* converts. And although both sexes are mentioned in the *last* text referred to, there is not a word about the Lord's supper. To what purpose then, does Mr. S. amuse people with a pretence of having brought an express command or example, to prove that women *should*, or *did*, receive the Lord's supper? Though we fairly argue their right, by way of consequence, yet he has brought no proof of their right, either from precept or example, nor any thing tending thereto.—And he is as lame in his proof of the change of the Sabbath, from the *seventh* to the *first* day of the week. Indeed, were I to read a perfect stranger upon the change of the Sabbath, that spake so *indifferently* about it, I should think he did not hold the morality of the
fourth

fourth command ; but that it is a good thing for Christians to meet together some day, or part of a day, in a week, for some religious duties. And in as much as we find the Apostles sometimes met on the first day of the week, and it is usual for Christians to do so now-a-days, it is well to meet on that day.—Truly, if my proof of infant-baptism was no better than this, I should think it high time to drop it.

P. 47. Mr. S. tells his readers, that I have told them of *three* covenants of grace ; one with Jesus Christ, one with *Abraham*, and one with *Eve*. And if by *Noah's* I mean a covenant of grace, then, he says, I have told of *four*. And then, once more, tells his devoted readers, that they may *easily* see what confused notions I have of the covenant. He does not say that I make out a *fifth* covenant, to take in those *Esauites*, who have despised their birth-right.

Nor am I so profuse of charity as to think he believes himself, when he says I have told the world of *three* covenants of grace. But the straits he was brought into, together with his shuffles, and the light he has received from *Jesuits*, he has left for the amusement of his readers. If his evidence was as full and clear as his confidence, I could not stand before him : and if his confidence had been as little and low as his evidence, he would never have exposed himself to the contempt of intelligent readers.—What if I had reckoned up *Moses* and all the prophets, besides the many thousands of believers under the ancient dispensation of the covenant? No doubt, accord-
ing

ing to the method in which he has begun, he would have entertained his readers with confidently asserting, that I had told of so many covenants of grace. I am not convinced by ridicule, that calling *Eve* the mother of all living, not so much because all mankind descended from her, as because she was a covenant mother, as *Abraham* was the covenant father of us all, was a blunder. Nor is the thought derived from *Rome*; but agrees with the most renowned Protestants, as any one that is able may see in *Synop. Crit. Pol.* on *Gen.* iii. 20. *Non dubium est, quin ad promissum semen respexit, ideo ה'ה vocat, q. d. vivificatricem, quod mortuum genus hominum per ipsius partum vivificandum foret.* As *Eve* was the cause of death to all that live, so she, as well as *Abraham* and *David*, was the root of *HIM*, who is the author of life, and of all those blessings of the covenant of grace, both to herself, and to all her posterity, that they do or shall enjoy. Many are included in this covenant, because they are *visibly* in *Christ*, who will be cast out at last. Many have been cast out, as *Cain* and *Ishmael* were; and many others cast themselves out, by *profanely* renouncing the covenant they were taken into with their parents. 'Tis true, *Mr. S.* tells his readers, again and again, that if all were taken into covenant, all would be saved; *i. e.* go to heaven: but this absurdity has been made manifest already. And therefore, when he says, "so that we see the covenant of grace which was revealed to *Adam*, *Abraham*, &c. did not include their children," it is well he did not add, that *we see this by scripture light*; for, according to the light shining in the Holy Scriptures, no man living can see but the children of
believers

believers are included with their parents in the covenant of grace.

P. 48. Mr. S. opposes me for saying, *the covenant is the foundation of ordinances*; and gives this for a reason of his opposition, *viz.* “It is God’s command which gives being to them.” But allowing it is the command that gives being to them, what will he gain by it? We have granted that, had there been no institution, it would have been presumption to have signed the covenant with the seal of circumcision under the former, or with that of baptism under the present dispensation. But what is that to his purpose? Was the covenant the foundation of the institution, or was it not? If it was, then the covenant is the foundation and reason of the command. But if he will say it was not, then let him deal with *Moses* for telling us that the covenant is the reason or foundation of the institution, *Gen. xvii. 9, 10.* *Abraham* was in covenant many years before God instituted the sign of circumcision as a seal of the covenant; but when he ordained that seal to be put to it, it had respect to the covenant as the reason or foundation of it. And when the initiating seal of the covenant was changed from circumcision to baptism, this was by a divine command; and as the institution of circumcision had relation to the covenant; so the present institution of baptism is founded on the covenant.

Mr. S. several times represents me as writing with a bitter spirit, and severe reflections upon the *Anabaptists* in my application.—I am willing that should speak for itself; and the reader will judge whether

whether his censure does not arise from my plain dealing being contrary to his interest.—If I should attempt to make any alteration in my way of writing, and still wrote faithfully, I am jealous he will say that *I am yet more vile*, and villify me the more for well-doing.—If the reader is heartily desirous to lay aside all prejudices, and go into serious and impartial enquiries into the will of God, respecting the grand doctrine I have defended, and the application I have made, there is reason to hope, he will have that divine assistance, which will enable him to judge right, both of my arguments, and my defence; and also, of that assuming and captious spirit, which is written as with *sun-beams* in Mr. S's performance. I readily grant that, in compliance with *Solomon's* advice, I have used a little severity in this *appendix*, lest tameness should encourage arrogance, and he should think “mere noise without substance,” was really unanswerable; or least he should think pretences to pity might serve as a sufficient cloak to any evil design.

I should now close my *appendix*, but that Mr. S. attacks me for a marginal note, which was in my *first* edition. And 1. He seems loth to have the sect represented as *re-baptizers*; and says they don't hold to it.—If they don't hold to it, I am sorry they practise it, and make a *schism* in the body of Christ thereby. But this is a flagrant truth, that they so fence, limit, guard and restrain their *communion*, and require those *conditions* of all whom they *admit*, that men must *put out their eyes*, or *sin against their conscience*, or not be *admitted* to their communion. The only hindrance that obstructs

fructs the freedom of *external* communion is wholly owing to themselves. They *despise* and *set at naught* christian churches, *merely* on account of a *particular mode* of baptism, which they have not yet proved *essential* to the being of that holy ordinance.

Mr. S. attempts to prove it from the word *baptizo*; and tells us that *Scapula* renders *baptizo*, by *mergo*, *seu immergo*, *ut quæ tingendi, aut abluendi gratia aquæ immergimus*, to dip or plunge, &c. Or *mergo*, *submergo*, *obruo aqua*, to plunge, plunge under, overwhelm in water. Very good: but why has he kept back a part of what *Scapula* has said? Is it to hide the truth from those that can't examine that *Greek Lexicon*? Whatever his motive was, he takes only what he thought would serve his turn, and leaves the rest. *Scapula* expressly adds, *item abluo*, LAVO, which, if he does not know, doubtless his voucher knows must signify, to wash off, put off, wash one's self or another person.—and *Schrevelius*, as he allows, renders the word *baptizo*, by *lavo*, as well as *mergo*, to wash, as well as plunge.

And as great criticks in *Latin* and *Greek*, as either of the former, say the same, and more. *Van Mastricht* says *baptisma* signifies *lotionem, ablutionem, sive aspersionem, sive immersionem*; *i. e.* washing, ablution, whether by *aspersion*, or by *immersion*. *Pol. Synop. Crit. on Mark vii 4.* says *baptismus, non semper tinctionem, aut immersionem, sed interdum lotionem tantum, vel etiam aspersionem, denotat. i. e.* the *Greek* word *baptismus*, does not always denote dipping, diving, or immersion, but

but sometimes washing only, or even asperſion. And again; *vel aquæ affuſione, vel immerſione: i. e.* by effuſion, or immerſion. *Grotius* ſays, *ebaptiſthe idem eſt ac eniſpato tas kiras, Luke xi. 38. i. e.* it is the ſame in ſignification with the *Greek* uſed for waſhing the hands.—*Symſon*, a very learned *Lexichographer*, ſays, *baptizo* is taken for any kind of waſhing, riſing, or cleanſing, even where there is *no dipping at all*; and adds, that *baptiſm* importeth no more than *ablution, or waſhing*.—Nor can the word ſignify more, in many ſcriptures. Let us attend to one or two. See *Matt. xx. 22. Can you bear—to be baptized with the baptiſm that I am baptized with?* Here it ought to be obſerved, that the queſtion is not what kind of baptiſm, or ſufferings *Chriſt had* to go through; but what baptiſm or ſufferings he endured before his laſt hour. And we all may know that he was *mocked, ſpit upon, bruised, beaten, &c.* Now, theſe and ſuch like places can by no means repreſent plunging, without offering violence to the plain literal ſenſe of them. So that *1 Cor. x. 2. And were all baptized unto Moſes in the cloud, and in the ſea.* Taking the familiar ſenſe of the words, every man would be ready to ſuppoſe, “ that the *Isra-* “ *elites* were ſprinkled here and there, with drops “ of water from the Sea, as they paſſed along, and “ from the cloud that was ſpread over them.” By which, ſays *Dr. Guiſe* from a learned commentator, the ſacrament of baptiſm might be more evidently ſignified. And ſo, it muſt refer to the adminiſtration by ſprinkling, and not by immerſion; ſince the *Egyptians*, that were drowned in the ſea, were baptized by the waters covering them, rather than the *Israelites*, that

went on dry land, and could be no other way washed, than with drops that might fall from the cloud and the dashing of the waves."— Hence it appears that *baptizo* does not make immersion essential to the *being* of christian baptism, because, according to great and learned christian writers, it does signify ablution, aspersion and washing, where there is no dipping at all, as well as immersion.

I beg the readers patience, while I turn aside once more, to meet my antagonist in his *learned criticism*, upon the word *autou*. He tells us, it is a pronoun relative, and that its antecedent, in *Acts* xvi. 33. is the jailor in *person* and not in *action*. The *Greek* stands thus, *Kai ebaptisthe autos, kai oi autou pantes parachrema*. *Beza* renders it, *et baptizatus est ipse, et omnes domestici illius illico*; *i. e.* he himself was immediately baptized, and all his domesticks. *Montanus* renders it, *et baptizatus est ipse, et omnis domus ejus continuo*; *i. e.* he was baptized, and all his house forthwith. I advise Mr. S. to get the help of some of his brethren, better acquainted with relatives and antecedents than himself, before he writes again, even tho' it should be against a smatterer, lest the unlearned reader should be amused with "mere noise without substance."

But to proceed: Mr. S. asks whether "it is not evident that Christ was baptized of *John* in the "river *Jordan*?" and quotes *Mar.* i. 9. *Ans.* No: it is not evident; for *eis ton Jordanen*, may as properly be rendered *at Jordan*, because the preposition *eis* very commonly signifies *at*, as well as

in. And so the preposition *apo*, *Matt.* iii. 16. might as well be rendered *from*, as *out of*, the water. And it would not make sense to render it, *out of*, in many places; particularly *Matt.* i. 17. Ch. 18. 8, 9. *Heb.* v. 7. and elsewhere. Hence, nothing can be certainly determined from these prepositions, as to immersion being essential to baptism.

Neither dare Mr. S. venture it here; but runs to the usage of the church at the beginning of christianity. To this end he brings a cloud of witnesses, and says, (P. 53.) they “all give in that “immersion was the primitive mode of baptism.” By this, I suppose, he would have his readers believe that all these authors witness that immersion was *universally* practised in the beginning of christianity. Therefore I desire the reader to observe, 1. Nothing that he has adduced from them makes it appear that the practice was *universal*, or that they thought it was so: the utmost that can be gathered from thence, is, that, in those hot countries, they did sometimes baptize by immersion; or that it was not uncommon to administer in that way. But, 2. It is certain that Mr. *Burkitt* (one of his witnesses) never meant to suggest that it was an *universal* practice; for he *expressly* says upon *Acts* ii. 41. “We need not enquire, “whether the apostles did it by dipping or sprinkling, both being lawful; but this may be said, “it is hard to guess how such a quantity of water “could be brought to the place, as might serve “for the decent dipping of 3000 persons in so short “a time. And, upon supposition that the water “was not brought to them, but they went down
“ to

“ to that ; baptizing so many by dipping, would
 “ have required a week rather than a day to dis-
 “ patch it in.”——And again, upon *Acts* xvi. 33.
 he observes, “ how improbable it is that the jai-
 “ lor and his household were baptized by dipping.
 “ ——St. *Paul*, who was newly washed, and
 “ his sores dressed, occasioned by stripes, cannot
 “ be supposed either to go out himself, or carry the
 “ jailor and his family, in the dead of the night,
 “ to a river or pond to baptize them ; neither is it
 “ in the least probable, that St. *Paul* himself was
 “ baptized by dipping : see *Acts* ix. 18, 19. The
 “ context may convince us, that he was baptized
 “ in his lodgings, being sick and weak, ha-
 “ ving fasted three days, and being in a very low
 “ condition, partly by his miraculous vision, and
 “ partly by his extraordinary fasting ; it was no
 “ ways probable that *Ananias* should carry him
 “ out to a river in that condition, to plunge him
 “ in cold water. Dipping then, surely, cannot be
 “ so essential unto baptism, as for want of it, to
 “ pronounce all the reformed churches through-
 “ out the world, to be null and void, as some a-
 “ mong us do ; and it may as well be supposed
 “ that the other witnesses did not mean that dip-
 “ ping was universal.”——From whence the rea-
 der may easily see that authors may suppose it was
 not very unusual to *dip* in baptizing, when they
 are far from suggesting that it was an *universal* prac-
 tice. And therefore it is a *fallacious* imposition
 upon the publick to bring authorities to prove an
universal, which were designed *only* to show some
 particulars, and not an universal practice.

Upon the whole : nothing appears from the
word

word *baptizo*; nor from the prepositions *eis* or *apo*, nor from primitive practice, that immersion is essential to christian baptism. Consequently it is *notorious*, that those are guilty of schism, who pronounce the baptism of the reformed churches no christian baptism, merely because they do not practise immersion. What shall be said then, of those who profess to be well acquainted with the *original* text, and with the ancient modes of administration, who insinuate into the minds of the *illiterate* that our baptism is no no christian baptism; and so persuade many to renounce it as a mere nullity? Where shall we find the least reason to hope they are not seeking themselves, and driving on a party design against Christ and his dear cause? Is setting up an uninstituted mode, as essential to the being of an ordinance, the way to promote the common cause of christianity? Or is it not rather, to take off peoples minds from the most concerning matters, and set them to contend for that which has nothing in it?

For a close of the argument concerning the sinfulness of persons renouncing their lawful baptism; suffer me to *address* those who have *lately* submitted to be re-baptized, especially in the adjacent towns. My address shall be *nearly* in the words of a very worthy clergyman of the *episcopal* church, upon the like occasion.—“ Allow me then, in
 “ the name of my GREAT MASTER, and for the
 “ honour of his holy institutions, which have been
 “ shamefully prostituted by some of you lately in
 “ this neighbourhood, to expostulate the case with
 “ you. I beseech you seriously to consider, both
 “ the sin committed against God, and the scan-
 “ dal

“ dal given to good men. By renouncing your
 “ former baptism, you have renounced your first
 “ dedication to God, and your former covenant
 “ relation to his Son Jesus Christ. You have dis-
 “ own'd that you ever were the *visible* members
 “ of his body : you have profaned a solemn ordi-
 “ nance of God, and taken his holy Name in vain.
 “ You have condemned all the protestant church-
 “ es throughout the world, who decry this prac-
 “ tice of yours as an abomination.”

Consider, I beseech you, how shamefully you
 are fallen, and bring forth fruits meet for repen-
 tance. Why have you precipitated yourselves
 into this evil ? “ The particular *mode* of admi-
 “ nistering baptism is not positively determined
 “ in the Scriptures : it cannot be ascertained, ei-
 “ ther from the signification of the word, or from
 “ the significancy of the ceremony, or from the
 “ command of Christ. Not from the significati-
 “ on of the original word, for that signifies *affu-*
 “ *sion*, and *aspersion*, as well as immersion. Not
 “ from the significancy of the ceremony, for pour-
 “ ing water on the person baptized, is as signifi-
 “ cative of pouring out the blood of Christ, and
 “ pouring forth of the Spirit upon a Christian, as
 “ dipping can be.—Nor do we find any com-
 “ mand from Christ to make it appear that any
 “ particular mode of administration, distinguish-
 “ ed from all other modes of administration, is
 “ essential to baptism. We are required to bap-
 “ tize with water, in the name of the Father,
 “ and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : but
 “ we find no command, either for the measure
 “ and

“ and quantity of the water; or for the *manner* of applying the water in baptism.”

Consider, I beseech you, what has been the first moving cause of your falling into this great error? Was it interest, to save your money; or was it strong prejudices against your minister; or was it wild *enthusiasm*, as was evidently the case in *Germany*? Let what will be the cause, is it not great pity that an uncommon degree of zeal should be manifested about a mode of administration, especially, since nothing can possibly be ascertained as to a particular mode, either from the word *baptizo*, or from the signification of the ceremony, or from the command of Christ? Do you begin to say, as one lately said, *be dipt or damned?* * Is all true religion expiring; will it soon be gone, unless you renounce all christian churches for the sake of a mode, which no man living can prove essential to the being of christian baptism? O take heed how you set up a particular mode of an institution at your own pleasure, when it is in its own nature indifferent. If any have said to you, *the Lord saith* that immersion is essential, they *have spoken vanity*, and you render yourselves vain in believing them.

* The zeal of such a teacher agrees with the *Anabaptists* in the *Low-Countries*, *A. D. 1555*. Who pretended to be the only true church, and declared that salvation could not be hoped for, out of their communion. See *Brabant's Hist.* vol. 1.

E R R A T A.

Page 21. line 7. for *rules* read *rule*. P. 23. l. 3.
for *were broken off* r. *were not broken off*. P. 30.
l. 21. for *Thus* r. *This*. P. 42. l. 5. for *I am able*
r. *I am not able*. P. 43. l. 8. for *happy* r. *unhappy*.
P. 68. l. 10. for *effusion* r. *affusion*. P. 72. l. 3.
for *the Scriptures* r. *these Scriptures*. P. 77. l. 1.
for *the* r. *his*. l. 5. for *these* r. *those*. P. 89. l. 3.
for *and* iii. 5. r. *Prov. iii. 6. l. 23.* for *frangit*
r. *singit*. P. 121. l. 25. for *Watts'* r. *Wall's*.

